

How PR 'Excellence' Theory and Subculture 'Best Practices'
Can Transform Arboretum Employees
into Brand Ambassadors

Capstone Paper

By

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About the Author

Barbara DeGroot is a public relations/communications specialist with the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. She joined the staff in spring 2007 and handles media relations and communication efforts in several areas - from contributing to the Arboretum Magazine and eNews to writing press releases, website and brochure copy and more.

Her prior work experience includes 10 years as writer and media relations manager for Global Volunteers, a St. Paul-based nonprofit organization that offers short-term service programs worldwide. (She personally has led volunteer teams in the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia.)

Barbara also was a copy editor at the St. Paul Pioneer Press; and features writer/editor for the Las Vegas Sun, Wausau (Wis.) Daily Herald, Lubbock (Texas) Avalanche-Journal and the Minnesota Sun/Sailor newspapers.

With Jack El-Hai, she co-authored "The Insider's Guide to the Twin Cities, Vols. I & II," a 400-page local guidebook. She also has experience in freelance magazine writing and editing.

This research project, on organizational communication and brand ambassadorship at the Arboretum, has been a fascinating journey of discovery and enlightenment. By engaging co-workers via surveys, focus groups and interviews, Barbara has gained a deep appreciation for their professionalism, compassion, goodwill and knowledge. Barbara looks forward to sharing her findings with colleagues at the Arboretum and other public gardens.

1.0 Introduction

"All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances." - Shakespeare, "As You Like It."

There's virtually no "backstage" at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, with its 1,200-plus acres of public gardens, plant collections, visitor center, education buildings and meeting rooms. More than 330,000 public visitors pass through its front gates every year to stroll the gardens, hike, bike, cross-country ski or snowshoe in the winter, dine, hold meetings, get married and take classes!

The Arboretum's 240 employees (which includes roughly 150 part-timers) range from gardeners to greeters, researchers, educators and support staff who are spending their workdays in a very public arena. In addition, the Arboretum attracts over 800 volunteers who regularly show up to tend gardens, prune trees, assist with children's activities, classes, special events and more.

The Arboretum staff is amazingly diverse; their work locales are quite separated – indoor offices, visitor center reception area, outdoor gardens and plant collections, the gardeners' workshop and greenhouse – and their skill levels, talents and backgrounds are widely divergent.

Generally, staff members say they feel fortunate to work in such a beautiful setting and often express this sentiment with enthusiasm. Yet there is always room for improvement and the Arboretum is no exception, especially in the area of "brand management."

This paper will address the following questions:

How can public relations theories –primarily James Grunig's "Theory of Excellence," plus subculture "best practices"–play a major role in transforming Arboretum staff into Arboretum "brand ambassadors"? Why is this important?

Ideally, organizational leaders in any field need to spend time: 1) managing the present; 2) creating the future and 3) nurturing identity. Too often they get bogged down in the first activity to the detriment of the other two (Wood, 2015). Work demands, minor distractions, a sense of isolation, widely diverse perspectives and priorities take precedence and cloud the greater brand perspective.

At the Arboretum, employees talk of an organizational climate characterized by strong subcultures, departmental "silos" and oftentimes minimal, superficial communication among units and even within units. Among the repercussions of this lack of unity and consensus is inconsistent – albeit well-meaning – customer service and, consequently, a weakened Arboretum brand.

Possible reasons include demanding work duties, misplaced priorities, skill and talent disparities, a large portion of part-time staff, workplace separation and other factors.

In truth, impression management and customer service are far from trivial when one realizes that the University of Minnesota funds only 10% of the Arboretum's annual budget and that the remainder of the budget is funded by the public - through gate fees, membership fees, private individual and corporate donations and gift store, restaurant and room rental proceeds. (2014 *Arboretum annual report*)

By incorporating public relations "Excellence Theory," subculture "best practices," other communication theories and proven customer service techniques into a

cohesive and strategic management strategy, Arboretum leaders and staff can move toward improving the workplace climate and ultimately, strengthening the Arboretum brand.

As employees feel more affirmed, invested and engaged in their jobs, they will genuinely communicate – by word and action – their confidence in and enthusiasm for the Arboretum to friends, acquaintances and the visiting public, in essence, becoming truly effective Arboretum "brand ambassadors."

This paper will attempt to examine the current Arboretum organizational "climate" and through academic literature review and primary and secondary research, suggest new approaches, strategies and tactics for possible solutions.

Areas of particular interest are the crucial roles of internal communications, the role of subculture "leaders"/ middle-management and organizational public relations. All are key to creating a unified, successful and productive staff that can deliver consistent brand messaging and excellent customer service.

Why this is important. Branding is an indisputable necessity for any organization, especially a leisure-time attraction – i.e. a large public garden – in the vibrant and active Twin Cities metropolitan area. What specifically is a brand? A brand is a set of associations that provide an organization with a distinct image and basis for a loyal customer relationship (Wehrenberg, 2014). It is a collection of impressions – both objective and emotional – that reside in the consumer's mind and it is powerful enough to command a strong commitment and offer a competitive advantage (Wehrenberg, 2014).

A layperson may view a brand as a logo or slogan or an advertising campaign and

shrug it off with a wary glance, when, in fact, an organizational brand is something much more organic, emotional, personal and powerful. In today's distracted and busy world, where so many diversions and voices strive for one's attention, it is imperative for an organization to present a cohesive message, image and mission in the marketplace – especially one that is genuine and sincere. An effective brand rises above the chatter and clutter as a welcoming beacon.

The creation of a successful brand involves four principles: (1) the brand is championed & managed from the top of the organization; (2) the values are lived and breathed across the organization; (3) the brand promise is consistently executed across all communications; and (4) brand activities are monitored and adjusted when needed (FutureBrand, 2014).

Principle #2 (values are lived and breathed across the organization) should involve employee input in brand development, training programs focusing on brand values and strategy; and performance evaluations and incentives that measure and reward employee brand ambassadorship. This paper's literature review, research and conclusions will attempt to shed light on areas needing increased brand engagement at the Arboretum.

Arboretum Background

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum was created some 57 years ago, in 1958, as an outgrowth of the University of Minnesota Horticultural Research Center (established in 1908). With help from the Lake Minnetonka Garden Club, the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis purchased the original 160 acres (adjacent to the research center) in hopes of furthering cold-hardy plant research and establishing a public demonstration garden. They donated the land to the university in 1958.

With this rich horticultural background, the Arboretum has expanded to over 1,200 acres of gardens, environmental display areas, research plots, tree collections, restored prairie and natural woods. It is currently a year-round destination for plant and nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. With the addition in 2005 of the stunning, expansive 45,000 square foot Oswald Visitor Center, complete with cafe, meeting rooms, gift store, art gallery and skyway access to the historic Snyder Building (containing the renowned Andersen Horticultural Library), the Arboretum has grown into a major metropolitan attraction. With that come challenges of brand management and competition for highly sought visitorship numbers.

2.0 Literature Review

A look at existing research from relevant academic and business articles:

2.1 Grunig's Public Relations Excellence Theory. Modern public relations research, especially the work of J. Grunig, emphasizes the importance of organizational integrity and committed leadership as core values and integral components of any successful organizational public relations effort.

The Public Relations Excellence Theory (Grunig, J., Grunig, L., 1993) was formulated from data collected through a decade-long study of more than 300 organizations in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada by the International Association of Business Communicators.

The Excellence Theory stresses the "relations" aspect of public relations and how it is crucial to build honest and productive bonds with all stakeholders, especially the internal stakeholders – the organization's employees.

Many public-relations professionals have moved beyond the longstanding "press agency" model of one-way messaging, propaganda and image management, and toward the "public information" model of communicating some accurate info but holding back on negative details. Another popular model – the "two-way asymmetrical model" – incorporates research to develop somewhat imbalanced messages that will sway the public to behave in the desired way. Grunig stresses the optimal public relations model is the "two-way symmetrical model" which incorporates research and two-way balanced communication to manage conflict and improve understanding with key publics. (Grunig, 2006)

"Excellent public relations departments serve as advocates both for their organizations and for strategic publics," (p. 168) writes Grunig (2006).

In reality, he concedes excellent public relations departments practice a "mixed-motive" model - combining two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical models - in their work (Grunig, 1984).

Good relationships with strategic publics are necessary for an organization to develop and achieve goals desired by both the organization and its publics, reduce costs of negative publicity, and increase revenue by providing services needed by stakeholders. To be most effective, PR practitioners must identify strategic publics and nurture long-term symmetrical relationships with them.

Grunig stresses "the paramount importance of continuing good behavior by organizations, good relationships with publics" and suggests that organizations should strive to attain the following characteristics in the relationships they build: reciprocity, trust, credibility, mutual legitimacy, openness, mutual satisfaction and mutual

understanding (Grunig, 1993, p. 135). This is especially crucial in today's "plugged-in" society, where information flows through myriad channels, at a highly accelerated rate, and in a seemingly more equitable, "democratic" exchange.

In addition to the abovementioned characteristics, Grunig's PR Excellence Theory further identifies characteristics of effective public relations in these categories: 1) Empowerment: effective organizations must empower public relations as a critical management function. 2) Communicator roles: let public relations executives play managerial roles as well as administrative roles. 3) Organization of communication function: public relations should be an integrated communication function and separate from, instead of sublimated to, marketing or other management functions (Grunig, 1992).

"Organizations use strategic management to relate their missions to their environments. Public relations contributes to overall strategic management by building relationships with publics that support the mission of the organization or that can divert it from its mission. Organizations plan public relations programs strategically, therefore, when they identify the publics that are most likely to limit or enhance their ability to pursue their mission and (they) design communication programs that help the organization manage its interdependence with these strategic publics" (Grunig, 1993, p. 166).

Effective organizational leadership and two-way reciprocal communication contribute to a satisfied workforce and, exponentially, a stronger brand.

Grunig's Excellence Theory is not without its detractors and qualifiers. And many experts claim it doesn't go far enough. For instance, Sung (2007, p. 192) cites the need for PR managers to possess not only public relations skills, but also adequate knowledge

of their company's business, the industry and the environment in general, in order to be effective in the leadership circle.

Stroh (2007, p.204) endorses a more organic view of management - one that stresses the importance of interaction, relationships and self-regulation, as found in chaos and complexity theories. Her view is that an organization is organic, flexible and diverse and that formal structure is nearly impossible; conflict is encouraged and meaning is created through constant interaction and participation. In this postmodern perspective, public relations managers are seen as activists involve in the facilitation of conflicts, rather than the resolution of conflicts. She suggests more research into this area to create a more nuanced ideal of the "postmodern" PR professional.

Others cite need for more research into the public relations field, especially its image as a vital, justifiable and necessary profession. Steyn (2007, p. 169) found that being part of the upper management circle is only one contributor to public relations success and that a large, functional public relations department is vital, especially one where technical tasks can be delegated to PR technicians. She stresses the importance of both a public relations professional in upper management as well as a middle-management PR position in a supported and fully functioning public relations department.

The Arboretum is part of a highly structured, bureaucratic university organization – but it also retains an "outlier" workplace ambiance because of its physical separation from the university campus. Therefore, one might consider developing a "hybrid" public relations approach – one that blends Excellence Theory characteristics with the post-modern, chaos-theory-inspired organic approaches. This is a topic for future researchers to investigate.

2.2 Customer-Service Theories/ Best Practices. As employees feel more affirmed, invested and engaged in their jobs, they will genuinely communicate – by word and action – their enthusiasm for the Arboretum to the visiting public, in essence, becoming truly effective Arboretum "brand ambassadors."

Yet it's naive to think good customer service is simply a matter of exuding an enthusiasm for one's job. That's part of it, but effective customer service requires continual, intensive employee training that, if successful and consistent, will result in a positive, welcoming experience for all visitors.

The Disney theme parks have initiated very effective customer-service training programs, with tactics that may be replicated in the realm of public gardens. A few insights:

- "Disney looks at every interaction between its 'cast members' (Disney-speak for employees) and guests as an opportunity to build connections with the brand" (Jones, p. 38).
- "Everyone in the organization should understand the company's values and how every action can impact the customer experience" (Jones, p. 39).
- "Don't neglect temporary or part-time workers (in your customer-service training), especially now that consumers can share their experiences with everyone on social media. Ensure that these workers are hired and trained with the same rigorous standards as full-time employees so customer service doesn't slip away" (Baltazar, 2013). This is key because often part-time staff have more free time to engage in social media.

- "Enhancing the communication between all levels of an organization helps effect change" (Jones, p. 39)
- "Listen to employees... If you listen to suggestions from your employees, they feel appreciated and part of your (organization). As the eyes and ears of the company, frontline employees also know what customers think" (Baltazar, p. 18).
- "Reward behavior you want to see repeated." Be it a drawing, free lunch or whatever, this is a good way to reinforce positive actions. (Baltazar, 2013, p. 18)
- "Provide communications training. Every employee at Disney is trained to be an effective communicator..... The staff is trained to answer common questions (about the organization), even if it's 'not their job.' " (Gallo, 2011)

2.3 Subculture Theories. Various subculture theories also apply to the Arboretum's workplace climate.

To understand subcultures, one must first understand the concept of organizational "culture." It has been described as "the attitudes, beliefs, experiences and values of a given organization" (Egan, 2008, p. 301).

Schein (1985) defined organizational culture as "the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic 'taken-for-granted' fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment" (p. 6).

Working with the organizational culture are subcultures (strong and weak) that can enhance or detract from workplace productivity – depending on their characteristics.

What is a "subculture"? Gelder (2007) defines a subculture as a collection of individuals with a shared identity and experience different from those of the larger culture. A subculture has connections to the main organizational culture and it also has distinguishing features making it unique from the larger organization (Egan, 2008).

Indeed, according to one study, perceived subcultures have a *stronger* relationship to organizational commitment than do main cultures because the former provide a more intimate, salient and informal reference group for employees. If employees see their subculture as supportive and innovative, they are more likely to have positive attitudes toward their larger organization (Egan).

Middle managers (who are often "localized" subculture leaders) also are key in interpreting greater organizational messages to subcultures. Knowing the specific subculture "lingo" and style is crucial to tailoring broader organizational messages to the subculture in a way members can relate to.

Academic research bolsters this belief. Research by Egan (2008) found that "organizational subculture is a formidable contributor to employee motivation to apply learning on the job. Study findings suggest that an innovative and supportive department or subculture is the greatest environmental influence on employee application of learning and localized leaders have a major opportunity for influencing the related motivation of their direct reports and followers" (p. 318).

Egan (2008) stresses that his findings do not diminish the importance of top organizational leadership on workplace learning, but rather, his findings elevate the significance of the employee's "immediate work context" to a new higher level of importance.

Numerous studies have documented the direct causal relationship between middle managers' "consideration" leadership style and subcultures' commitment to the organization (Egan).

Egan's study results "suggest that employee learning-related motivation and performance can be influenced by employee experience of specific, effective leadership behaviors." He recommends that management training programs emphasize leadership styles that support employee transfer of learning, especially crucial in our current knowledge-based economy. Specifically, the "consideration" style of leadership, which emphasizes innovation and collaboration, is more conducive to transfer of learning than the "initiating structure" leadership style which leads to a more bureaucratic culture, although both can conceivably create supportive environments (Egan).

"It has been argued that employee transfer of learning is an essential ingredient in the establishment and endurance of successful organizations and that motivation to transfer learning is an important precursor to employee application of new knowledge" (Holton, Bates & Ruona, 2000, p.335).

Although few studies have been conducted, researchers have determined employee motivation to transfer learning to be a byproduct of a learning-supportive organizational culture.

2.4 "Silo Mentality" vs. "Silo Activities." A common roadblock to organizational success and knowledge-sharing among staff members is the concept of the "silo mentality," which is addressed in the business media.

On the Forbes.com website, Gleeson and Roza (2013) write of "The Silo Mentality: How to Break Down the Barriers." "Silo mentality" is a mindset where certain

departments or subcultures do not wish to share information with others in the same company. It can negatively impact efficiency in the overall operation, reduce morale and sabotage productivity (Businessdictionary.com).

Clampitt (2013, p. 209) cites other factors that contribute to "silos," including language differences, cultural differences (high vs. low context, short-term vs. long-term, high power vs. low power) and use of space. The latter is especially applicable to the Arboretum, where education staff have their own building (a block away from other administrative offices) and gardeners have cubicles in the "headhouse" located on Arboretum grounds but a mile away from other offices. The main common area is the Restaurant, but that is also a very public arena.

Gleeson and Rozo contend that most "silo" situations are the result of a conflicted leadership team and that it is leadership's responsibility to create – with employee input – long-term solutions to this problem.

Members of the leadership team must agree on a common and unified organizational vision. "There must be buy-in and core understanding of the company's long-term goals, department objectives and key initiatives within the leadership team prior to passing it down to the teams" (Gleeson & Rozo, 213).

And it follows that departmental teams will be more inclined to "buy-in" to these objectives if they've had a say in the initial goal decision-making. (Wood, 2015).

A united leadership team will build trust and change the "my department" mentality among managers to a broader "our organization" mentality. Conversely, conflicting goals and objectives can lead to competition and confusion among leadership and this can ripple down to employees.

Organizations benefit when employees have a big-picture perspective of their company and know how all departments and levels interconnect and work together for the unified whole. (This theory is echoed in comments by Arboretum directors and others who were interviewed for this research paper.) This big-picture viewpoint is key to defeating silos and is accomplished through collaboration, teamwork – even job shadowing – and focusing on a common mission.

Gleeson and Rozo also stress the importance of managers honing in on what motivates each employee and providing appropriate incentives for improving work performance. By nurturing good job performance, managers encourage teamwork and productivity over the "it's not my job" attitude. Today's knowledge economy relies on confidence, creativity and collaboration, especially among departments, note Gleeson and Rozo.

Other recommendations include encouraging key employees to become "boundary spanners," promoting a collaborative communication style, holding company-wide seminars and retreats (Clampitt, p. 218-225).

Yet, other voices contend some "silo-ing" is necessary for achieving productivity. One Arboretum director in an interview stated, "Sometimes we actually need those 'silos' to get work done and goals and outcomes accomplished. There are times when you need to focus." One might argue that he is talking about "silo activities" – focusing intensely on work in front of you – which is a positive state of productivity, as distinguished from a "silo mentality."

As a side note, Henry Ford relied on "silo mentality" theories in creating the assembly-line manufacturing process that became an industry standard around the globe.

"Ironically, the production efficiency gained through simplicity and standardization decreased the effectiveness and efficiency of communication" (Clampitt, p. 207). The key is knowing how to distinguish between "silo activities" and the more over-arching "silo mentality."

2.5 Neuroscience of Leadership. Promoting change and reducing or eliminating the "silo mentality" may not be so easy, when one considers the neuroscience of the human brain.

Rock and Schwartz (2007) look at organizational leadership challenges through the research of scientists who have used modern imaging technologies – magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), positron emission tomography (PET) and quantitative electroencephalogram (QEEG) – to gain insight into how human brainwaves influence behavior. Their No. 1 finding: Change is painful. It is difficult to attempt any change because it provokes sensations of physiological discomfort and at its most extreme, impulsivity, irrationality and animal instincts.

Rock and Schwartz (2007) also claim neuroscience research disputes the theory of behaviorism (and "carrot & stick" incentives and threats) as an effective tactic for prompting change. They claim it rarely works in the long run. The "humanist" approach – using empathy to help employees build self-esteem and develop skills through self-actualization – also is downplayed by the authors because it is considered too time-consuming for most workplaces, doesn't sufficiently engage people and the results aren't guaranteed.

What does work? According to Rock and Schwartz, it's a matter of asking pertinent questions and supporting staff in working out solutions on their own. Encourage

them to focus. Repeated, purposeful and focused attention on one subject – often referred to as being "in the zone" or experiencing "flow" – can lead to long-lasting personal evolution and greater learning, claim the authors. People who practice a specialty every day literally think differently and forge new mental maps, the authors explain.

Bradberry (2015) elaborates on the benefits of "flow" (or focusing). He describes it as a "state of mind in which you find yourself completely engrossed in a project or task and you lose awareness of the passage of time and other external distractions. (it's) an exhilarating state in which you feel euphoria and mastery simultaneously. The result is not just happiness and productivity but also the development of new skills through a heightened state of learning.

"The key to reaching 'flow' lies in organizing your tasks such that you have immediate and clear goals to pursue that play to your strengths. As you begin working on these tasks, your focus increases along with your feelings of adequacy. In time, you reach flow state, in which productivity and happiness flourish. Set clear goals each day and experiment with task order until you find the secret formula that gets you flowing" (Bradberry).

Managers who can guide staff in this "flow process" will reap benefits in employee morale and collaboration.

How to effectively influence change in others' behavior? Use solution-focused questioning that facilitates inner reflection and problem-solving. Empower employees to focus on solutions instead of roadblocks, let them come up with their own answers.

An example: A few years ago, Arboretum meeting room rental revenue was down drastically; the sales manager was perplexed and asked her staff to spend a few days

"thinking outside the box" and come up with some solutions. This was the heyday of TV's "Amazing Race" and, within hours, a few staffers collaborated on the idea of offering an Arboretum "Amazing Race" team-building activity as an "add-on" feature for room rentals. It was an overwhelming hit! Rentals increased dramatically. This wouldn't have happened without the manager encouraging creative problem-solving among staff.

2.6 Part-Time vs. Full-Time and Effects on Employee Engagement. It is often assumed that people who work part time are less engaged and committed than their full-time counterparts. The author of this paper initially wondered if this might be a factor in employee engagement issues at the Arboretum, especially in light of the large proportion of workers who are part-timers (approximately 150 of the 240 total employees or roughly 63 percent).

Research proves otherwise. Johnson, Shannon and Richman p. 233, (2008) surveyed over 312,000 employees in 25 organizations and concluded that "the average Engagement Index of part-time employees is virtually the same as the score for full-time employees." They also found part-timers have lower stress and burnout than full-time employees.

The study did find one telling difference, however, in the area of "extra role behaviors" (aka, willingness to go the extra mile). The study found that part-time employees, while dedicated and engaged, are somewhat less willing to work extra hours to help the organization succeed. The distinction was 93 percent of full-timers willing to work extra hours vs. 85 percent of part-time employees willing to do so (p. 233).

Perhaps, it's more a managerial issue and which activities have a higher priority in management's eyes. Does one's manager consider the all-staff meeting as important as getting one's daily work assignments completed?

In reality, part-time employees have great potential as brand ambassadors because their flexible work-life balance may allow them more time for socializing and social media involvement. Such one-on-one interaction is a powerful communication tool in today's splintered media community.

3.0 Research Methodology & Results: Surveys, Focus Group, Interviews

3.1.1 - Arboretum Staff Survey. An original quantitative, 20-question Arboretum Staff Survey was distributed to employees at the April 8, 2015, all-staff meeting. Approximately 70 staff members were in attendance; 56 surveys were returned. For perspective, the Arboretum numbers around 240 employees in summer (87 of which are full time); in winter the staff is reduced to 142 employees (52 of which are full time). The large number of part-time staff (nearly 2/3 of staff during summer) and diverse schedules may account for the modest attendance.

Survey questions attempted to gauge Arboretum employees' attitudes toward customer service, their job satisfaction and their views on the effectiveness of internal communication. Questions were multiple-choice with options for additional comments. Employees were asked how they obtain general information about the Arboretum and work-related news; what is the extent of their contact with the visiting public; how they rate customer service at the Arboretum and similar queries. The survey also asked them to provide info on their job assignment, how long they've worked for the arboretum and

their age category. They were also asked if they would be interested in participating in a focus group, and, if so, they were asked to provide their name and contact info.

3.1.2 Results - April 2015 Arboretum Staff Survey showed overall enthusiasm for the Arboretum as a visitor-friendly destination, with 50% of respondents calling it inviting and another 40% describing it as "very inviting."

One employee enthused, "When people love their work, it shows! I think the grounds crew, for the most part, love their jobs and they love the Arb!"

Over 80% of respondents said they communicate with the visiting public during a typical workday. Nearly 100% of respondents (all but one) answered affirmatively when asked whether they consider themselves a representative (or ambassador) of the arboretum to the outside world.

One employee wrote: "I would like to change this. I am relatively new and do not feel I am familiar enough (with the Arboretum) to be an ambassador."

Another wrote a comment of frustration, saying there's "no explicit training/ daily direction/ or specific event or function beyond greeting and question answering, that engages grounds crew (gardeners) with visitors."

Nearly 70% responded positively (either "yes" or "maybe") to the idea of receiving training in customer service in the future. Comments included "there was one customer service training in 2010 - none since then" and "(such training is needed) especially for new employees." Another suggested that this type of training should be done at an all-staff meeting.

When asked if a "get to know the Arboretum" presentation would be helpful to all employees, the results were dramatic, with 70% responding "yes" and 25% responding

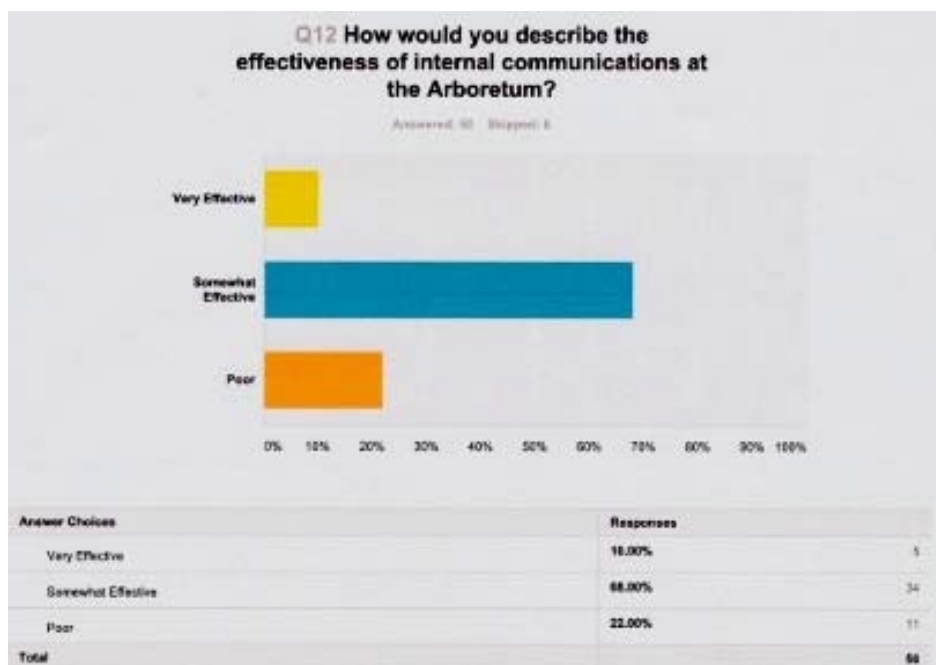
"maybe" and only 5% responding "no." One commented that such information should be part of every staff meeting and added "give us more info!"

Overwhelmingly, the respondents said "yes" (96%) when asked if the all-staff monthly meeting is a good source of Arboretum information.

Some offered suggestions to enhance a public image: "Just wearing an Arboretum jacket promotes the Arboretum; maybe we could all have one to wear in public."

One area in need of improvement, according to this survey, is the area of internal communications. To the question of "How would you describe the effectiveness of internal communications at the Arboretum?" nearly 68% responded with a halfhearted "somewhat effective," 10% responded "very effective" and 22% responded "poor."

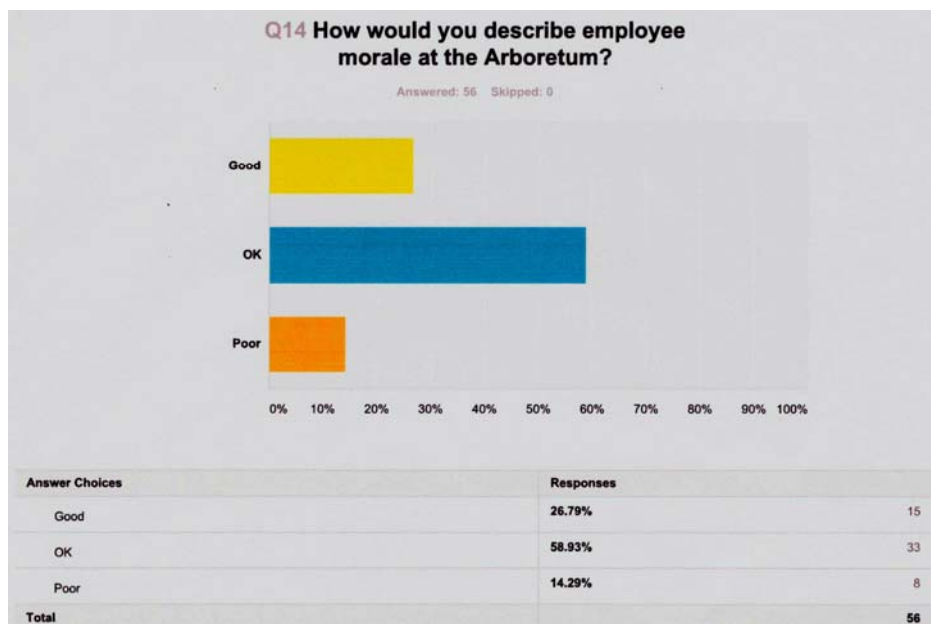
The following graph shows a specific result from the Arboretum survey. The entire survey results are found in Appendix C.



Comments on internal communications were telling - "somewhat effective - when it is constructive - not when it throws a colleague under the bus"; "we need to work on

internal (communication) - more use of the intranet would be good"; "poor - I think there is a breakdown between the gardeners and upper management"; "when I'm busy outside, it's hard to sit down and get emails. Not enough time!" and "Not all areas talk to each other or help one another."

The following graph shows a specific result from the Arboretum survey. The entire survey results are found in Appendix C.



When asked how they would describe employee morale at the Arboretum, 56% responded it was just "OK" and 27% responded "good." (See graph above.)

3.2.1 Supplemental Research - University of Minnesota Employee Engagement Survey. A University of Minnesota Employee Engagement Survey was administered online Oct. 13-31, 2014, by the Hay Group, an outside consulting firm, and confidentiality was assured. Results for Arboretum respondents were compared with those of respondents from the entire university employee pool.

The Employee Engagement survey was developed to measure two specific dimensions to define employee engagement: 1) employee commitment and dedication

and 2) effective work environment. Roughly 70 Arboretum employees participated in the survey. The survey was limited to benefit-eligible employees (those working 30 or more hours weekly). Student interns and seasonal temporary employees were excluded.

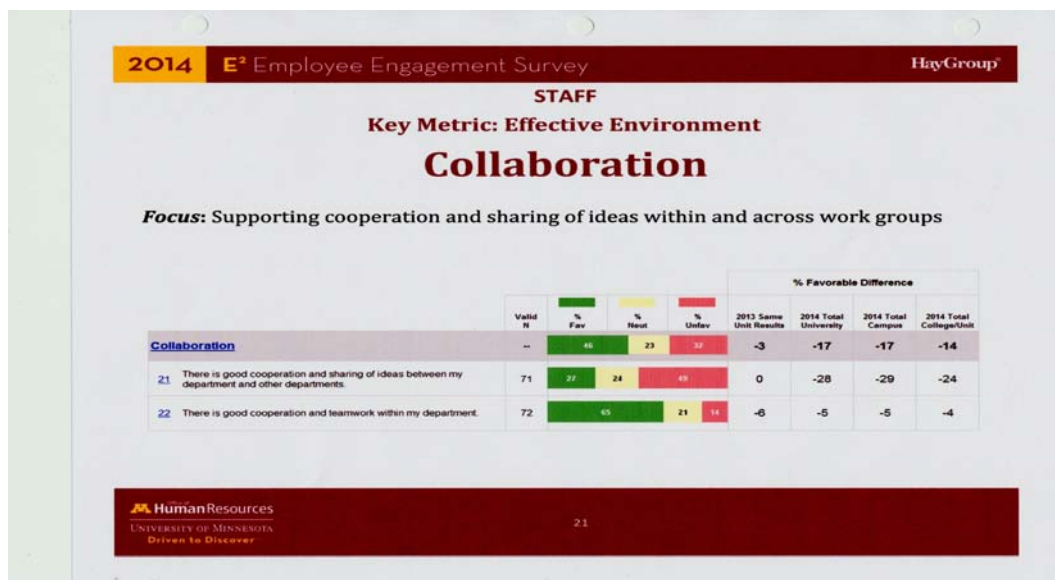
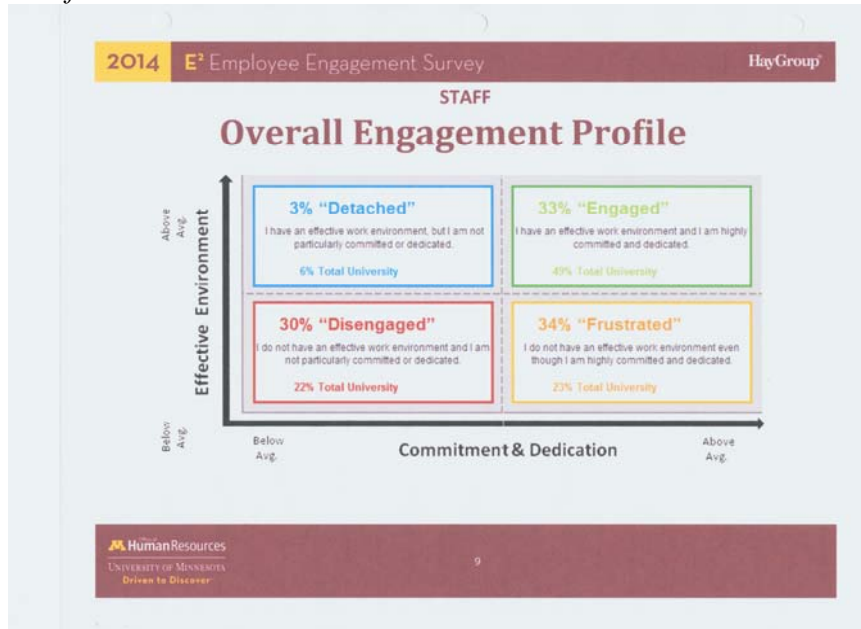
3.2.2 The 2014 U of M Employee Engagement Survey Results. The results relating to the Arboretum work setting proved telling.

In response to the statement "There is good cooperation and sharing of ideas between my department and other departments," only 27% of Arboretum respondents were favorable, 49% of respondents were unfavorable and 24% were neutral. The Arboretum staff responses were nearly 30% lower than responses from the total university employee community.

Responses to the statement "My manager/supervisor provides clear and regular feedback on how well I do my work," were also interesting: 47% responded favorably; but 29% responded unfavorably. This response is 14% lower than responses from the total university.

The Arboretum's Overall Engagement Profile was sobering: 30% of Arboretum respondents felt "disengaged" in their work environment (not particularly committed or dedicated) compared with 22% of the total university workforce. Only 33% of Arboretum respondents felt "engaged" (highly committed and dedicated) compared with 49% of the total university workforce.

The following graphics show select results from the 2014 U of M Employee Survey. See Appendices for more.



Also, 34% of Arboretum respondents reported being "frustrated" ("I do not have an effective work environment, even though I am highly committed and dedicated") compared with 23% of the total university respondents.

3.3.1 Focus Group. Eight staff members from various Arboretum work areas convened for a focus group on May 28. Entire transcript is available in the Appendix.

3.3.2 Results - Focus Group. An open-ended discussion on workplace ambiance and customer service soon led to comments of frustration about lack of collaboration, "silos" and the need for rigorous training for new employees and customer service training for all employees.

In summary, participants were asked to offer up suggestions for improved morale, team-building and customer service. Suggestions included: mandatory comprehensive orientation for new hires, mandatory rides on the narrated visitor tram tours of the Arboretum, customer-service training for all staff, more structured internal communication via the internal website (intranet), a weekly staff newsletter, required attendance at all staff meetings, "job shadowing" between departments, more employee get-togethers, such as open houses, coffees.

3.4.1 One-on-One Interviews. From mid-May through mid-June, interviews were conducted with two marketing/PR professionals from other large public gardens, one in the Chicago area, the other near Philadelphia, in addition to an interview with the director of a Minneapolis art museum. Transcripts are found in Appendices G-I.

During that time span, four arboretum directors also were interviewed for their perspectives on the issues of engagement, customer service and collaboration. Two of these interviews were conducted via email; two in person. The directors were asked to comment on (1) what steps their departments can take to improve inter-departmental communication and avoid "silos"; (2) how Arboretum directors can play a key role in improving morale; (3) what their specific department doing to engage employees in the

greater Arboretum mission; and (4) suggestions for improving Arboretum customer service. Transcripts for three interviews are in Appendices J-L (one director declined being recorded).

3.4.2 Outside Interview Highlights: Jennifer GoldSmith. Marketing manager at Morton Arboretum, located in the greater Chicago area, and a well-known public-garden branding expert and public speaker, Jennifer GoldSmith shared employee-engagement insights honed from a recent two-year "brand refresh" campaign at the Morton. Employees were engaged in the project and were asked for input throughout the entire process. "We recognized all staff members as vital members of the organization," said GoldSmith, adding they attempted to achieve Grunig's ideal of "two-way symmetrical" communication.

GoldSmith contends public gardens naturally draw committed employees. "I've found that people are incredibly passionate about what they do here (at the garden). People want to work in an environment or for an organization that makes them feel good about what they're doing. ... This environment allows us to bring people in who already have a natural commitment. So within public gardens, half the battle is done. There's a feeling of 'I believe in what you do, I believe in what you stand for, I believe in what I can do to support that organization.' "

The rebranding experience also helped develop consistent brand messaging among all employees, she said. "We worked with an agency to help us redefine our brand architecture. And within the brand architecture, we started with a series of conversations with people – with different teams and at different times and we asked them to tell us what they think of this organization....tell us what we do, what we can do

and what we should be doing. We included staff and board members and volunteers and we asked everyone what we stood for and what we believed in. What we were trying for was not necessarily to do a visual identity (brand image) but to shift our messaging."

Staff was involved throughout the process. "I did an update blog on a regular basis to let people know what we were up to and I put it on the intranet. ...What we found was that people needed to hear what we were doing in *now* time."

Meetings were held to update staff and an impressive 80 percent of fulltime staff attended.

The brand messaging – "we are champions of trees" – and brand personality and target audience were developed. "Then we developed a 'messaging book' that contained all our new brand messaging. It was called "Trees Speak. Listen" and we read it to the staff and it was very powerful," said GoodSmith.

A staff video on the new brand messaging was developed – it incorporated brief segments showing various staff members talking about the concept of "champion of trees" and what it means to them personally in their job. "This showed very clearly that everyone was a brand ambassador (for the Morton Arboretum)," concluded GoodSmith.

Other key findings from GoodSmith:

- You have to ask staff to participate and make them feel their voice is represented in anything you do.
- Promote good customer service and community outreach by tactics such as having staff wear "thank you" buttons and randomly thanking the visitors, or "Ask me a Question" buttons to spark conversations.

- Ask gardeners to give informal walks through the areas they are responsible for - this recognizes their talents.
- Encourage team-bonding via "lunch & learns," potlucks, weekly coffee hours.

3.4.3 Interview Highlights: Lyndel King. This author interviewed Lyndel King, director of the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, who also travels the globe speaking on the topic of museum branding. (Side note: The Arboretum is considered a museum because of its collections of plants and artwork and it is currently in the process of applying for official museum accreditation through the American Association of Museums.)

Like GoodSmith, King mentioned the effectiveness of a "rebranding" effort undertaken when the Weisman was temporarily closed prior to moving to its new Gehry-designed building in 2011.

"We worked with a branding firm and they took us through lots of exercises that didn't seem relevant at the time, but we did them and, in the end, we came out with a process that was really helpful to us in determining what the perception of the museum was and what we wanted it to be.

"We talked to different constituent groups, talked to representative staff board members, students and just people around town who weren't necessarily affiliated with us," King elaborated. "What was most valuable about the entire process is that we got the staff on the same page and all of a sudden, things we had been arguing about for years seemed to fall exactly into place and we were able to agree and come to decisions more easily," she continued.

Developing a "brand personality statement" was the most important step, King said. "We decided to use WAM instead of our full name (Weisman Art Museum) because the acronym is more friendly and approachable. Once the senior staff were on board, we started implementing the new brand look and messaging on all our printed materials and signage."

The new brand implementation moved beyond printed materials and also was incorporated into staff "uniforms," hiring priorities and staff training, especially with front-line staff. "I wouldn't say it's perfect, but once we decided this is what we wanted to be and we had buy-in from senior staff, then everyone had to come up with ways of implementing the brand in their own department...whether it was the info desk, or the staff in the galleries or administrative staff...it really was effective."

Another method King used to increase employee engagement was the process of documenting work procedures for all departments. "We did this so that everybody knew deadlines and different departmental needs. We went over this at departmental meetings so that, for instance, the curatorial staff could understand what the communications staff needs and why they (the curators) just can't pull things out of an exhibition the day before (it opens) because the PR folks may have sent out an image of the pulled artwork with their press release. ...you don't think of that stuff. Understanding each other's jobs and deadlines helps. And we've made a real effort to do that."

Also, King collaborated with staff to create a list of priorities for the year. "I interviewed everybody and we talked and came up with a list of 10 things we needed to do over the following year to improve and achieve staff engagement. One of the tasks was writing down the protocols and deadlines and sharing them. Another was more

frequent informal events for staff - such as happy hours and informal discussions rather than (more formal) guest lectures. We all did the Strengths Finder exercise that the U offers and we had someone come and talk about the results and how we wanted to work with that info. Working on all this – and all the while keeping visitors front and center – helped a lot."

Other employee-engagement suggestions from King:

- An annual luncheon at the beginning of the academic year with all the staff, including the new part-time student employees. New staff are introduced and department heads spend a few minutes talking about what their department does. (This could be replicated by the Arboretum in the springtime when new summer staff and interns come onboard.)
- The Weisman has senior staff meetings and all-staff meetings every other week. Important announcements are shared at the meeting and then reinforced via emails to all staff.
- Being aware of the daily employee routines and adjusting to promote more staff interaction. At the Weisman, the mailroom and the copy room also are the staff lounge area. And that's a deliberate arrangement. "All staff need to come upstairs to get their mail. I see staff informally in the copy room and the work room/coffee room. It really helps internal communication."

3.4.4. Interview Highlights: Marnie Conley. Longwood Botanic Garden Marketing Manager Marnie Conley has a distinguished career in both public garden administration and the academic realm as an adjunct college professor in marketing.

Conley cited her garden's deliberate practice of staff collaboration, its comprehensive internal communications website (intranet) and well-regarded customer service training program as keys to successful employee engagement and brand ambassadorship. "We have a culture here that's highly collaborative and we're conscious of people's roles and expertise. It's rare that we have departments 'going rogue.' We're an inclusive environment and that's the only way we can get things done here," says Conley.

Conley pointed to a few recent events that enhanced internal "brand ambassadorship." In 2012, Longwood launched a new brand and to reinforce employee engagement with the new brand, they focused on internal communication. "We said the only way we can get everyone engaged and start to make changes is through internal communications," said Conley.

Longwood focused on a web application program – Sharepoint – that allows for collaboration via many diverse tools – email, intranet, internet, social media. "Now we do everything on that system. Everyone has their own departmental space, their division space. We share documents and collaborate but most importantly, the homepage is something that comes up with a new screen every morning for everyone. It has the day's events, tells what's happening in the gardens today and it goes through every event, what's in bloom, cafe menu and operations status. So any closures, shutdowns or any work that's going on in the gardens is in that daily section. Our attendance and key performance indicators (are there) so we know what attendance is at all times. We also have spotlights on staff and we have a section called 'this week's news' and more. (The intranet site) is updated daily for our 190 full-time staff and over 200 part-time staff."

Note: Longwood's full-time/ part-time staff proportions are similar to those of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

The intranet is a broad information exchange – "anyone can put anything on there...but it is controlled to some degree within each department."

Longwood also is deliberate in the area of customer service. Its Guest Experience Academy is a nationally known training program. All new Longwood employees attend the two-day guest experience academy training and it is also open to outside participants once a year.

"(In the academy) we talk about our brand, our mission, our founder, educating them on the basics of Longwood and our culture and then we go through our steps of (customer) service. (We) educate every staff member, no matter if it's a plumber, a marketer or a ticket-seller. We stress that guests are buying an experience and not a ticket. Every exchange matters. This is extensive 'on-boarding' (training) and refreshers are held throughout the year," said Conley.

Customer service is evaluated in employee performance reviews and it's embedded in the performance management system, she added.

Conley believes public gardens, like many nonprofits, attract passionate people. But that doesn't mean you can omit staff training. "That is something we take seriously. We try to support guest services, support HR and communicate to staff and hope people realize the positive work we're doing out there for our guests. It's important for people to see and that translates into good exchanges with guests. So while Sharepoint is great, (customer service) is less about a technology tool and more about a culture in general.

"We work very, very hard here, but it's all for the common goal. We know what our end goal is and that makes a huge difference. In six years, we've changed dramatically for the better and I think a lot of that has to do with engagement of staff on planning efforts, strategic planning...so that everyone understands what their role is and they also understand how it attaches to the greater cause."

3.5.1 Interviews with Arboretum Staff Directors. Via the internet and in-person, this author conducted interviews with four Arboretum staff directors. The questions focused on how to reduce "silos," what directors can do to improve employee morale, internal communication and customer service.

3.5.2.A Interview Highlights: Director A. In responding to the issue of "silos," Director A touched on several existing staff communication tools – their pros and cons. "Our staff meeting time slots are too short to cover everything that departments should communicate with each other," he said. "Other information is available on the intranet or in eNews, etc., but I'm not sure everyone reads it. I am not sure people would read an internal eNews... It does take a staff person to write it and they would need input from all departments so that may not work (for staffing reasons)."

"Another idea is for each department to designate a person who will attend planning meetings and other venues where topics are discussed and then they would be responsible for communicating information to the appropriate people in their department. (This suggestion also was echoed by another director.)"

Director A also suggested compiling organizational department summaries detailing tasks and job responsibilities of each staff member. (Also was noted by King.)

When asked specifically how Arboretum directors can play a key role in improving employee morale, he offered the following suggestions:

- Keep staff informed of new projects, programs, issues, etc.
- Remember to thank people for their hard work and provide specific feedback.

Examples: "I really liked your garden design because the colors complement each other and plants are arranged in an interesting way" instead of just "Good work."

- Respond to employee concerns and follow through on things we say we will do.
- Look at the U of M Employee Engagement Survey results and implement an action plan to deal with things that stand out in the survey.

When asked, "What is my department doing to engage employees in the greater Arboretum mission?" he responded, "Not as much as we could do. We have some employees teaching classes and some are doing TV or radio shows or volunteering at the State Fair ... Another good example is the Horticultural Research Center staff growing pumpkins for the fall (Arboretum) pumpkin display.....But most operations staff are struggling to get increasing amounts of work done in their own areas."

He added that having Arboretum plant researchers speak at all-staff meetings helps everyone understand ongoing, behind-the-scenes research work.

Director A offered the following ideas for improving customer service:

- Everyone needs to know basic Arboretum information and keep informed of current events and programs. The Weekend Report (email) that a staffer sends out on Fridays and the press releases and eNews help a lot with this.
- People have to be trained to say, if needed, "I don't know but if you go to X (library, Master Gardener Desk, Info Desk, etc.), they can help you."

- Wear nametags or uniform shirts.
- Handle negative visitor actions – such as standing in the garden plantings, climbing trees, picking leaves – in a friendly but firm manner and turn it into a teaching experience versus a lecture or criticism.
- Have enough staff scheduled on busy weekends and weekdays to keep restrooms clean, avoid lines at the gatehouse and gift store and info desk.

3.5.3. Interview Highlights: Director B. This director offered up the following prescription for avoiding "silos" and improving communication at the Arboretum:

- "It starts with a shared, common vision. This needs to be shared as part of our goals. Furthermore, we need to build it into expectations, share clear examples of how teams work across matrix organizations and reward those who demonstrate this value of teamwork and respect.
- "The 'we' in the prior sentence is all of us....but in the beginning of the change process, Arboretum leaders need to embrace the cultural shift - build motivation, support respect and inclusion/teamwork from the front."

How can Arboretum leaders play a key role in improving employee morale?
His answer: "Do the above. Listen. Clearly articulate mission, vision, goals and how each person makes a positive difference in this shared enterprise. Be honest. Be a role model of emotional competence, respect and leadership. Reward those who stand out, reward the team, inspire others to achieve."

Director B's suggestions for improving customer service encompass the above actions, plus:

- Know our customers.

- Keep our servitude saw sharp through shared bench-marking best-in-class and training.
- Assure that wherever there is an Arboretum experience, have support in place and ready.
- Drive to continuously understand and improve customer/visitor interactions at all experience points.
- Assure ready resources are in place to meet the service demands/expectations at all experience points.

3.5.4. Interview Highlights: Director C. This director stressed that the Arboretum staff has grown in size dramatically over the years and needs to change accordingly. "It used to be that you knew everyone's name; you built relationships and you built trust and then communication. So how do we communicate (amongst ourselves) without that trust?"

He noted that, on the positive side, the Arboretum's intranet has every staff person's photo and name. "What it doesn't do, however, is tell us what people do. Perhaps more staff bios could be added?"

Director C agrees with other directors about the need for more inter-departmental communication – reports on meetings, planning sessions and more. He cites the existence of the Arboretum Council, a group comprised of representatives from various departments that meets regularly. "I think we should have Arb Council reps or point persons who can fill us in on what's happening.

"There's also a Directors Council, a forum for conversation, but it has to be intentional," he added.

"The Arb-All (organization-wide) emails are good, but they need to be more regular. They are too ephemeral."

He suggests possibly having a monthly staff newsletter – with deadlines - as a tool for inter-departmental communication. "It would force people to plan ahead and get organized."

3.5.5. Interview Highlights: Director D. When asked how to build employee morale and "buy-in" to the Arboretum mission, this director responds, "I think people will have better morale if they are overly informed. So my commitment is 'when in doubt, over-inform.' "

"When in doubt, overcommunicate with your colleagues about anything you believe they need to know. Never assume anything. Now it's painful sometimes because it's a lot of work...And it's human nature that when things are painful and a lot of work, we often take the shortcut. And communications and the feeling of camaraderie suffer.

"You just have to say to yourself, 'Alright I just finished this call report or this email or this conversation' and you have to think, 'who do I need to inform? Who in my collegial world needs to know what I learned in this meeting?' "

When asked how directors can improve employee morale, Director D responds, "If you're on my staff, my task is to make you look brilliant...It means we need to surround you with the stuff that helps you do your job better...That could mean equipment, or sending you to conferences or whatever.

"But it might even mean something as simple as going out to Floyd's for an after-work or end-of-fiscal-year beer or having everyone to my house. That's a little more

substantive, a chance to get to know each other as human beings. Let's forget about what you do at the Arboretum and get to know each other."

On customer service: "When people pull in to the driveway at the Arboretum, their experience has to be nothing but gangbusters; it has to be top shelf. We must greet them with smiles, pleasant words....Hopefully, this customer service style is effective enough so that after an hour or so, their reaction is 'these people are pleasant people, they have nothing but smiles, this might be a great place to work because they exude joy and happiness. I think I'd like to try this place again sometime....Let's come back in a couple of weeks.' They then may look at our membership incentives and, all of a sudden, the math takes over and they sign up for a membership."

4.0 Discussion- Applying the Literature Review & Research

How this paper's Literature Review and Research results apply to my research question:

How can public relations theories –primarily James Grunig's "Theory of Excellence," plus subculture "best practices"–play a major role in transforming Arboretum staff into Arboretum "brand ambassadors"? Why is this important?

4.1 'Excellence Theory' Applications: Role of the PR Manager. There are several aspects of Grunig's Excellence theory that apply to the Arboretum's current organizational dynamics. According to Grunig's theory, the PR manager is most effective when empowered into a director role, equal and not subordinate to others in the directors' circle. This allows the PR professional an active role in organizational strategic planning, brand messaging, decision-making and leadership.

At the Arboretum, the public relations manager currently reports to the Retail Sales and Communication director and is not an integral part of the leadership inner circle.

That specific department – retail sales and communication – is more focused on marketing to external audiences, increasing revenue and managing relationships with visitors. Public relations functions, by their very nature, are broader and more mission-driven – relating to internal as well as external audiences. For these reasons, it is recommended that the PR director be elevated to the upper management circle.

The possible new directorship breakdown would be as follows (in random order): (1) revenue sales and visitor services; (2) public relations and communications; (3) development; (4) education; and (5) operations. (See existing Arboretum organizational chart in Appendix M.)

Tangentially, the PR operations staff (currently a staff of one) needs to be strengthened to enable it to grow into its full potential of "excellence" beyond the current asymmetrical "press-agency" type of duties.

4.2 'Excellence Theory' Applications: Symmetrical Communication.

Arboretum survey results indicate low ratings regarding the effectiveness of Arboretum internal communication. Currently, leadership communicates with staff using a two-way *asymmetrical* model, through the channels of sporadic organization-wide emails, plus the monthly all-staff meetings. These may be somewhat effective for superficial communication, but inadequate for rigorous, results-oriented internal communication.

Many of the gardening staff feel shortchanged because their work outdoors makes it difficult for them to access computer terminals and email messages in a timely manner.

The all-staff meetings are quite effective and informative; however, many part-time staff and front-line staff are unable to attend these meetings due to scheduling and work demands (specifically the need to be available to the visiting public). There is an

employee "intranet"; however, it is not designed nor utilized to its fullest potential.

Presently, it features a "what's blooming" list, daily calendar of room rentals, plus links to employee HR info, contact list for staff (non-alphabetically arranged), etc. It is not intuitively configured; thus, difficult to navigate. Comments from the Arboretum Staff Survey are telling:

- "Not everyone uses the same (communication) system consistently";
- "When people want to communicate, they can be effective";
- "We need to work on internal communication; more use of the intranet would be good";
- "I think there is a breakdown between gardeners and upper management;"
- On an employee newsletter – "maybe a good idea if it were short, easy to read, with only direct facts and info," "If it were brief with the most pertinent info."
- On staff morale: "Not all areas talk to each other or help one another."

Additional organization-wide communication is recommended - possibly in the form of an expanded intranet, staff newsletter (both electronic and paper) or other media.

Current "boundary-spanning" team-building activities include all-staff meetings, a holiday party and seasonal potlucks (coordinated by the gardeners). These are great but too sporadic.

This author suggests that Arboretum create a rigorous orientation program for new employees to ensure that all employees are trained in the organizational mission and goals. Also a formalized customer service training program is advised for *all* staff in order to create a consistently warm and welcoming Arboretum experience for visitors.

4.3 Subculture Theory Applications: Subcultures are a force – positive and negative – to be reckoned with. Strong and salient subcultures exist at the Arboretum - undoubtedly a natural result of the diversity of its staff and work functions. The gardening crew could be considered a large subculture; other subcultures comprise front-line staff, education, membership, development and marketing/PR.

Existing research shows that subcultures can be a benefit to an organization – if they are perceived as supportive and innovative by their members, and if the subculture leaders are effective. The Arboretum would benefit by cultivating positive communication and brand messaging with middle managers (who are likely to be subculture leaders), as well as informal "natural leaders" among staff and through them, reinforce the big-picture perspective of the organization.

4.4 'Silo Mentality' Application: "Not all areas talk to each other or help one another," "breakdown between gardeners and upper management," "throw a colleague under the bus." Such comments from the Arboretum employee survey suggest that some perceive the Arboretum work atmosphere as one of "everyone for himself (herself)."

This is echoed in the U of M Employee Engagement survey findings, specifically the responses to the statement: "There is good cooperation and sharing of ideas between my department and other departments." To this, only 27% of Arboretum staff taking the survey responded favorably; 49% responded unfavorably and 24% were neutral. The Arboretum staff responses were nearly 30% lower than responses from the total university community.

Upper management can address the "silo mentality" issue by developing a unified organizational "brand message" that can be communicated thoroughly to all departments

and employees. Of necessity, this brand messaging needs to be general enough and intentionally ambiguous to resonate with and engage all the Arboretum's diverse subcultures.

If feasible, a "re-branding" experience, as described by King, GoodSmith and Conley and incorporating input from all staff members, would help everyone focus anew on organizational mission and goals. Even an abbreviated, short-duration "re-branding" exploration would be beneficial. Branding possibilities: "For Plants and People - A Place to Grow" and brand personality - the approachable, welcoming benevolent sage.

Currently the Arboretum mission seems wordy and in need of updating.

"To be a growing resource for horticultural and environmental information, plant conservation, research and education; and to inspire and delight visitors with quality plants in well-designed and maintained displays."

An all-staff rebranding effort could provide the structure to update the mission statement.

This collaborative branding exercise would encourage a big-picture organizational perspective among all employees and lead to training and cross-training on how all departments and levels interconnect and work together for the unified whole.

5.0 Limitations & Future Research

The topic of transforming staff members into brand ambassadors is a large, multifaceted, all-encompassing subject requiring further research beyond this paper.

The author concedes that the manner in which the survey was conducted may have inadvertently influenced results because the researcher is well-known by colleagues.

Due to time constraints, the paper survey was distributed; however, an online survey may have communicated more of a sense of anonymity.

Future researchers might delve more deeply into the perspectives of staff and managers/ directors to more accurately gauge their attitudes and brand commitment. This could be done through in-depth interviews and/or focus groups.

The concept of the postmodern, organic leadership style that thrives on change and dynamic relationships (as found in chaos theories and mentioned on Page 9) is another area for possible research that may apply to the Arboretum.

Likewise, a more thorough scanning of current research in the area of organizational subcultures, the "silo mentality," and organizational communication techniques would be enlightening. In addition, Arboretum leaders would be wise to envision their "army" of volunteers as brand ambassadors and develop ways to enhance their role in this area.

Finally, a thorough evaluation of the U of M Employee Engagement Study would be beneficial to this project.

6.0 Conclusions / Recommendations

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is a northern treasure - a wellspring of horticultural and environmental education, research and inspiration. It delights and enchants visitors of all ages. Yet, with so many local and regional venues vying for the precious leisure-time, tourism dollar, every recreational attraction must put its best foot forward and make a winning impression. There are no second chances in this competitive marketplace.

That is why branding and employee engagement are so important to the Arboretum. Any visitor-dependent organization in today's "plugged-in" climate needs clear brand imaging and sincere, powerful messaging to rise above the clatter and engage its employees and visitors (and volunteers) in a top-notch, unforgettable garden experience that will lead to repeat visits, memberships and possibly even donor relationships.

This is especially crucial because 90% of the Arboretum's annual budget is dependent on the public (visitorship) dollar. And nearly all of the Arboretum staff work "on stage" – interacting daily with the visiting public – to a large or small degree.

Successful Arboretum branding must be championed and managed by the Arboretum leadership circle. It must be "lived and breathed" across the organization. It must be consistently executed across all communications and monitored and adjusted as needed (FutureBrand, 2014).

This requires training programs focusing on brand values and performance evaluations and incentives to measure and reward employee brand ambassadorship.

This author encourages the Arboretum leadership circle to add one more seat at the table – that of a Communications (PR) Director who will be charged with overseeing internal communications and Arboretum branding internally and externally. The Arboretum needs such a manager to create, nurture and ensure a "communications climate that empowers, engages and advances the organization's goals and enriches the work lives of employees." (Tims, 2015).

Results of this paper's research show that significant changes are needed in the areas of internal communications, training and brand messaging at the Arboretum. Staying the course will only result in weakened morale and further employee disengagement – and yes, costly employee turnover – that will ultimately threaten Arboretum visitorship numbers and public image.

Through original and secondary research and the scanning of relevant academic and business literature, this research endeavor offers the following recommendations for transforming Arboretum employees into Arboretum brand ambassadors who will deliver the quality customer service and messaging to assure a robust Arboretum visitorship and future success.

6.1 'Big-Picture,' Large-Scale Recommendations

- **Redesign the Public Relations Manager role into a PR-Communications Directorship Role.** This will enable this valued professional to fully contribute as a leader in strategic planning and as an organizational "boundary spanner" and communicator to interact with and engage the organization's most valuable stakeholders - its employees.
- **It is recommended that the PR department be separate but equal to other departments such as marketing and retail sales.** This will ensure that the public relations function is fully realized as a key player in organizational effectiveness.
- **Nurture and encourage the Arboretum's mid-level managers to be effective leaders.** Give them the tools and leadership skills to fully realize their important

function as subculture leaders and liaisons for the greater organization. They are often the "guiding lights" who every day inspire and motivate employees.

- **Encourage interdepartmental project teams and partnerships, plus "boundary-spanning" networking events** to reduce the incidence of "silo" thinking at the Arboretum. Also apply "collaborative leadership" tactics that encourage employee problem-solving and lead to a "flow" learning-intensive mindset among staff.
- **Initiate an organizational "re-branding" exercise that encourages organizational leaders and all employees to seriously think about and communicate the Arboretum mission and branding.** Due to gardeners' winter layoffs, this requires workable scheduling to accommodate as many staff as possible.
- **Encourage management to think "big picture" when creating employee schedules** in order accommodate organization-wide priorities.
- **In the next major remodel of Arboretum buildings, staff leadership should consider adding an all-staff coffee room or lunchroom.** Currently, there is no "staff-only" area where employees can convene and get to know each other.
- **Focus on helping part-time workers reach full potential.** This means working on engagement, providing training and managers setting priorities to encourage involvement.

6.2 Practical Fixes/ Recommendations

- **Revamp the Arboretum intranet to make it more inviting, informative, current and user-friendly.** This existing tool can be revised as a more immediate and relevant source of Arboretum news and employee engagement.
 - Ask staff to write their own bios and work descriptions; highlight different employees weekly or monthly, showing photos or even videos of them at work, explaining what they do.
- **Consider appointing departmental representatives who can attend Arboretum Council and other large-scale meetings** and require them to report back to departmental colleagues on the latest news and developments.
- **Initiate some form of employee newsletter - whether in print or electronic - to update employees on vital 'need to know' information.** This might be a weekly or daily staff newsletter. At a minimum, it might be an extension of the weekly "what's in bloom" email reports or the "what's happening this weekend" emails that are sent to all staff on Fridays.
- **Why not utilize today's "plugged-in" devices to our advantage and create an "app" for Arboretum staff** to use daily for updates on events, individual achievements, bloom reports and other information?
- **Require all new staff to undergo a rigorous, formalized orientation program** to familiarize themselves with Arboretum mission, history and goals.
- **Require all staff to undergo formalized customer service training** to ensure an a consistent Arboretum brand message and image. Reinforce key

messages of welcome and perhaps a "10 Things to Know about the Arboretum" mental cheat sheet for all employees.

- **Require staff to attend all-staff monthly meetings - whenever feasible.**

These are valuable team-building, big-picture meetings that can build cohesion.

- **A branded "uniform" - be it a polo shirt or jacket -** should be distributed to employees to present a consistent Arboretum image to guests.

The Arboretum staff are well-meaning, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and good-hearted and the public deserves to know this. Already, since this research project was initiated, this researcher has noticed positive changes. An enhanced leadership Directors Circle, more inter-departmental interaction and more all-employee get-togethers are just a few of the encouraging changes. More to come!

The Arboretum is a beautiful garden, but, like any garden, it needs sunlight (of leadership), nourishing rain (of encouragement) and good care (of commitment).

###

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How PR 'Excellence' Theory and Subculture 'Best Practices'
Can Transform Arboretum Employees into Brand Ambassadors

APPENDIX

July 2015

Barbara DeGroot
JOUR 8206 Capstone
M.A. Strategic Communication, University of Minnesota

APPENDIX A: Arboretum Employee Survey

Spoken Remarks: As part of my master's program at the U of M, I am doing research on strategic communication practices. I am focusing on the Arboretum and would appreciate your input by completing this (optional) survey. Please return this survey to Survey Bin (back of this room) after this meeting or drop it off in the same bin in the Marketing office in the Snyder Building by April 10.

Thanking you in advance. Barb DeGroot (612-301-1277)

Arboretum Employee Survey

1. How do you rate the Arboretum as a visitor-friendly place?
Very Inviting _____ Inviting _____
Accommodating _____ Just Right _____
Room for Improvement _____ Difficult to experience _____
Other/Comment _____
2. How often do you share with family, friends, acquaintances the information you've received at an all- staff meeting or from other official work sources?
Quite Often _____ Sometimes _____
Never _____ Other / comments _____
3. When you share that information, is it via any of the following channels? Pick all that apply.
Email _____ Facebook _____ Phone _____ Person-to-Person _____
Other _____
4. Do you communicate with the visiting public during your typical work day?
Yes _____ No _____
Other /Comment _____
5. If yes, how often?
Regularly _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____
6. Do you consider yourself a representative (or ambassador) of the Arboretum to the outside world?
Yes _____ No _____
Other/Comments _____
7. What are the defining traits of an Arboretum "ambassador"?
Friendliness _____ Familiarity with the Arboretum and its offerings _____
Compassion _____ Courtesy _____
Other _____
8. Do you feel that being the "face" of the Arboretum is part of your job? Yes ____ No ____

Other/ Comment _____

(more)

9. Do you feel it should be a part of your job? Yes ____ No ____

Other / Comment _____

10. What are your sources of general Arboretum news and updates?

Email _____ Website _____ Intranet _____

Monthly all-staff meetings _____ Video clips _____

Arboretum Magazine _____ ENews _____ Facebook _____

Other / Comment _____

11. Do you feel the all-staff monthly meeting is a good source of information?

Yes ____ No ____

Other / Comments _____

12. How would you describe the effectiveness of internal communications at the Arboretum?

Very Effective _____ Somewhat Effective _____

Poor _____

Other/ Comment _____

13. Do you think an employee newsletter would be a good idea?

Yes ____ Maybe ____ No ____

Other /Comments _____

14. How would you describe employee morale at the Arboretum?

Good _____ OK _____ Poor _____

15. Would you be interested in receiving training in the area of customer service?

Yes ____ No ____ Maybe ____

Other / Comment _____

16. Have you ever attended volunteer tour-guide training or received any "overview" training on what the Arboretum has to offer? Yes ____ No ____

Other/Comment _____

17. Would a "get to know the Arboretum" presentation be helpful to employees?

Yes ____ No ____ Maybe ____

18. What best describes your current job responsibilities? (Circle one)

Front-line Staff Garden Crew Building Crew Support Staff Supervisor

Manager Director

19. How many years have you worked at the Arboretum? (Circle one)

Less than 1 year 1-4 years 5-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years Over 20

20. What best represents your age? (Circle one)

18-32 33-48 49-67 Over 67

(Optional) If you are interested in participating in a focus group, please provide your name and email:

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX B: Arboretum Employee Survey - Comments only (page 1)

1. How do you rate the Arboretum as a visitor-friendly place?

Finding the main entrance is confusing - which way from 5 & 41? / Which lane to use at Grand Entry?

Visitor map hard to use./When its busy we don't always have enough "front line" staff

2. How often do you share with family, friends, acquaintances the information you've received at an all-staff meeting or from other official work sources?

3. When you share that information, is it via any of the following channels? Pick all that apply.

NA - All-staff meetings are not useful or informative in my humble opinion

4. Do you communicate with the visiting public during your typical work day?

Yes I do - so it is nice when we are well-informed

5. If yes, how often? about 4,000 per season - for this tram driver who is "driven to discover"

6. Do you consider yourself a representative (or ambassador) of the Arboretum to the outside world?

"I love the Arb!" / Just wearing an Arb jacket promotes the Arboretum; Maybe we could all have a jacket to wear in public / No - I would like to change this. I am relatively new and do not feel I am familiar enough to be an ambassador / Yes - in casual conversation

7. What are the defining traits of an Arboretum "ambassador"?

Patience / knowledgeable (twice), informed / eager to talk and tell others where you work./ seeking suggestions for improvement / empathy / a smiling face! / a friendly hello!! How may I help you? /some plant - horticulture knowledge/ Informative / happiness and a genuine willingness to interact and help/ has horticulture tips

8. Do you feel that being the "face" of the Arboretum is part of your job?

When people love their work, it shows! I think the grounds crew, for the most part, love their jobs and they love the Arb!! / No - no explicit training/ daily direction/ or specific event or function beyond greeting and question answering, that engages grounds crew with visitors

All who work here are ambassadors of the Arb

9. Do you feel it should be a part of your job?

As well as an advocate and representative of the University of Minnesota / Yes, for me, I know I have more to offer / Yes - with training

10. What are your sources of general Arboretum news and updates?

Also the weekly "what's on this weekend" from Charlene / Regular grounds staff meetings (2), also just talking with co-workers / Also "Learn" (education) brochure / Arb-2All emails / from other staff and visitors/ Observations at work; co-workers (2) / Staff interactions /People

11. Do you feel the all-staff monthly meeting is a good source of information?

Yes - would be nice to have more plant-related presentations/ never attended (I work at gatehouse)/ sometimes / Everyone should attend! / Sometimes it goes on too long - finish by 9:50 - this would accommodate the grounds crews

Maybe - it used to be more about what is going on out on the grounds but it has drifted away from that / Yes - but I don't have time to attend

12. How would you describe the effectiveness of internal communications at the Arboretum?

Not everyone (or dept) uses the same system consistently/ Somewhat effective - when it is constructive - not when it throws a colleague under the bus / When people want to communicate, they can be effective/ Somewhat ineffective / We need to work on internal - more use of the intranet would be good/ Problem is that for few people, communicating is uppermost on their list of to-dos/ When I'm busy outside, it's hard to sit down and get emails. Not enough time! / Poor - I think there is a breakdown between the gardeners and upper management / Depends on the topic / Always room for improvement between departments

13. Do you think an employee newsletter would be a good idea?

Maybe - if it were short, easy-to-read, only direct facts and info / We had one long ago; yes, if done right / yes - if it were brief -most pertinent info

APPENDIX B: Arboretum Employee Survey - Comments only (page 2)

14. How would you describe employee morale at the Arboretum?

OK - Not all areas talk to each other or help one another;/ OK - depends on the season / Poor-sometimes

15. Would you be interested in receiving training in the area of customer service?

Yes - there was one customer service training in 2010 - none since then / Especially for new employees/
Yes - at staff meeting - for everyone! / I feel I already have these skills

16. Have you ever attended volunteer tour-guide training or received any "overview" training on what the Arboretum has to offer?

If you paid me to attend, I could then volunteer in the winter when I'm laid-off/ I have hosted some guide training sessions / I didn't know it was offered / Yes - Sandy Tanck is an excellent trainer /
A long time ago - should be allowed every so often

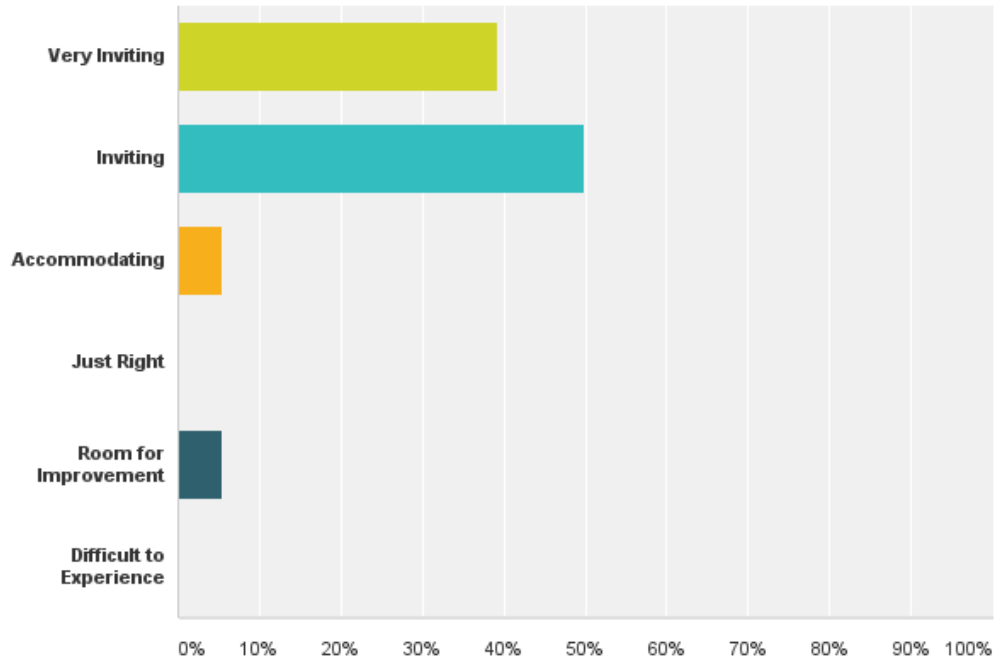
17. Would a "get to know the Arboretum" presentation be helpful to employees?

Maybe- depends on content and attitude of employees / Jeff Johnson's "behind the scenes" tour is great for staff - esp. in-building staff/ For new employees it would be helpful / Every staff meeting - give us more info!! / Many years ago the staff got to go on a staff tram tour which was very informative / Yes - many new employees and a good refresher for old-timers

APPENDIX C - Arboretum Employee Survey

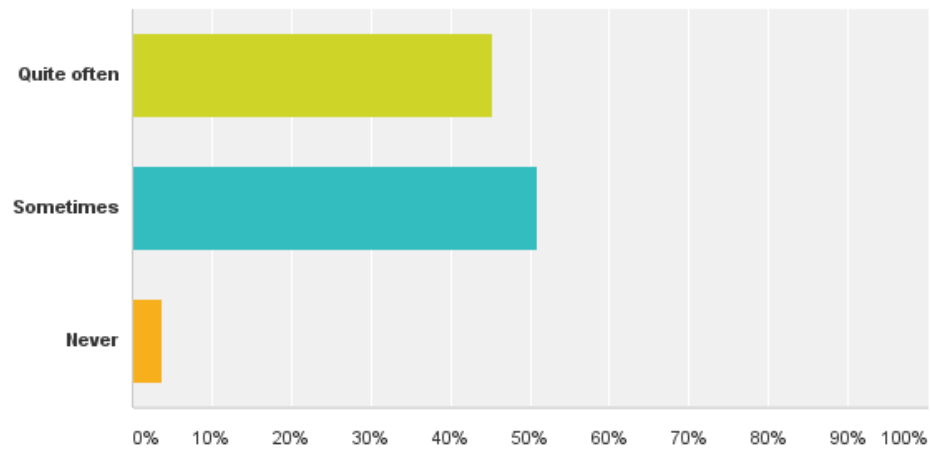
Q1 How do you rate the Arboretum as a visitor-friendly place?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



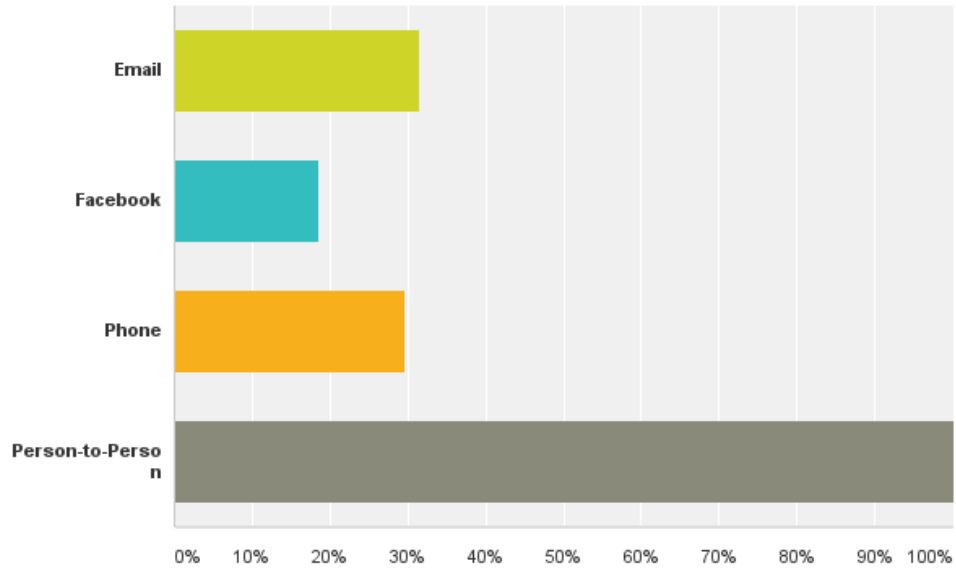
Q2 How often do you share with family, friends and acquaintances the information you've received at an all-staff meeting or from other official work sources?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 3



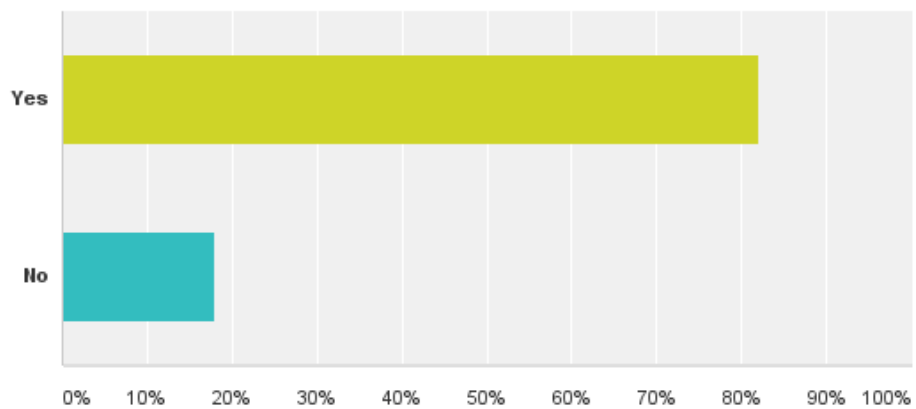
Q3 When you share that information, is it via any of the following channels?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 2



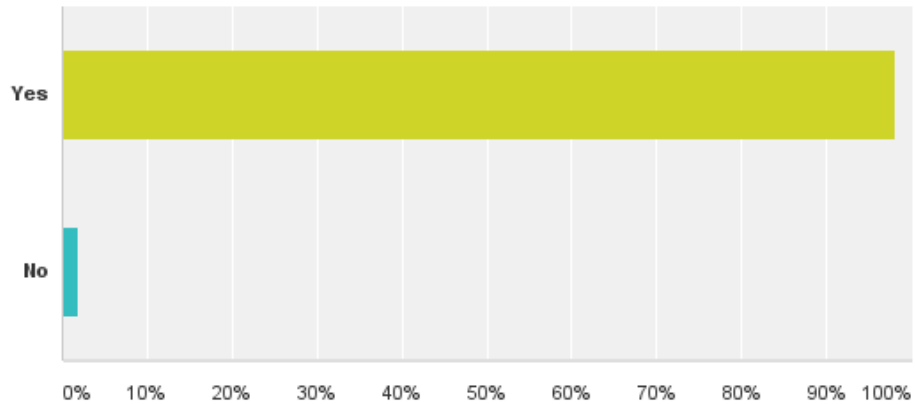
Q4 Do you communicate with the visiting public during your typical workday?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



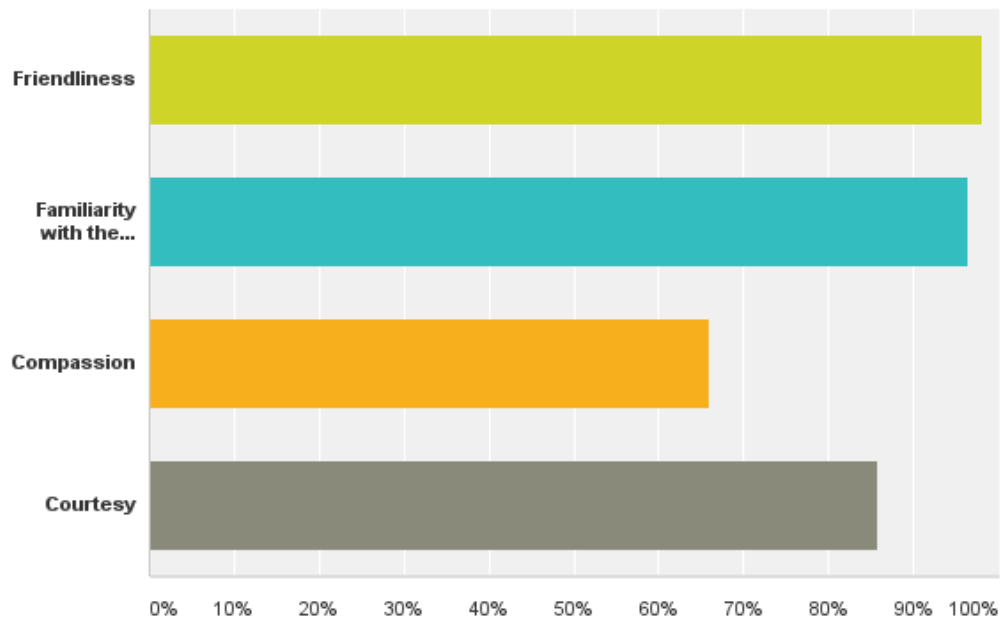
Q6 Do you consider yourself a representative (or ambassador) of the Arboretum to the outside world?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1



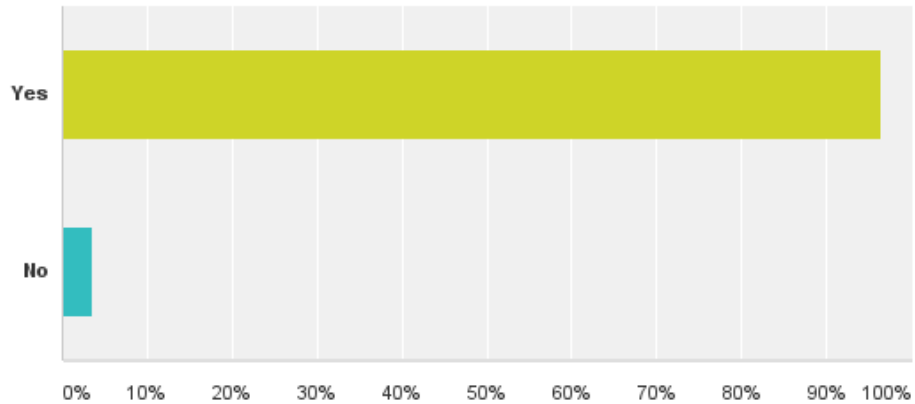
Q7 What are the defining traits of an Arboretum "ambassador"?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



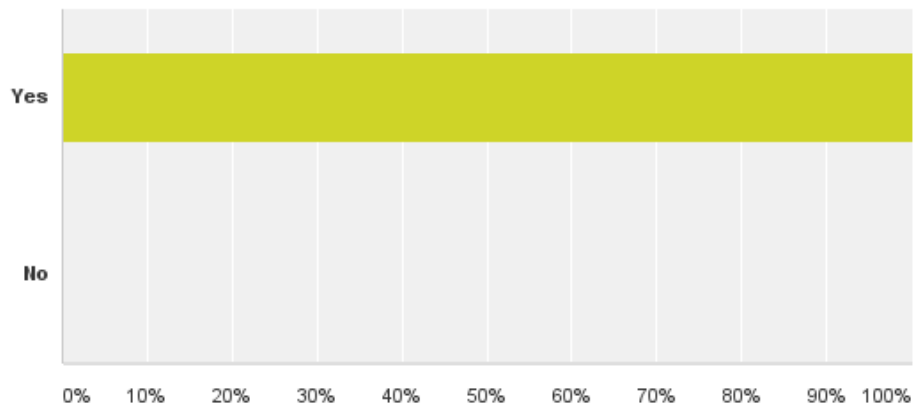
Q8 Do you feel that being the "face" of the Arboretum is part of your job?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



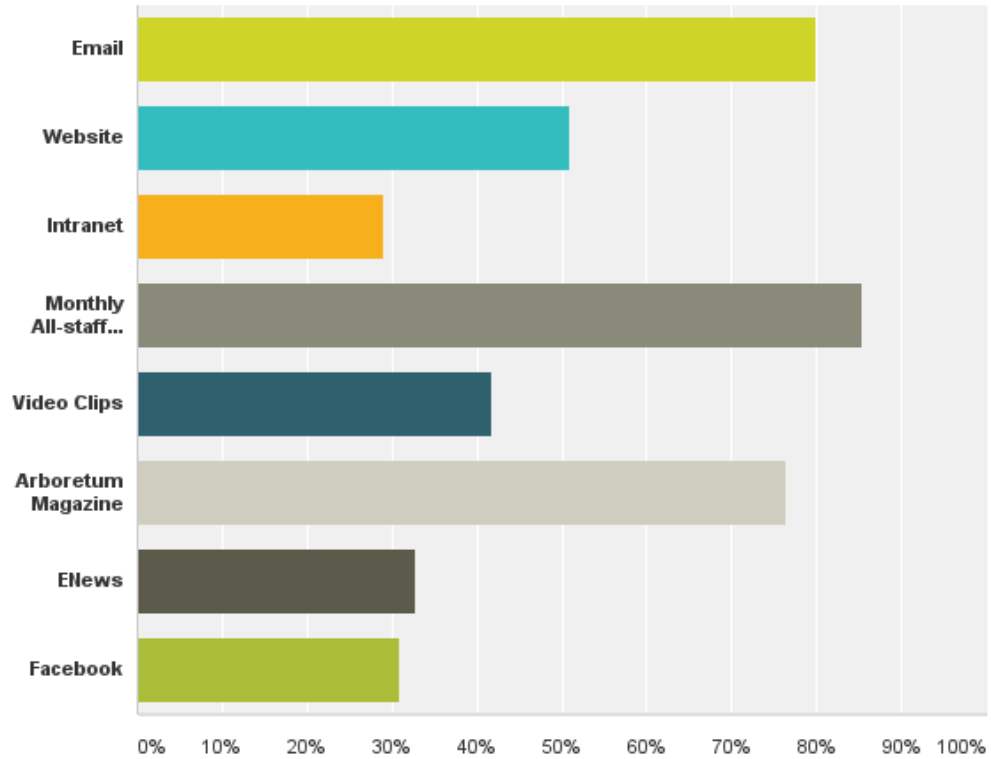
Q9 Do you feel it should be part of your job?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



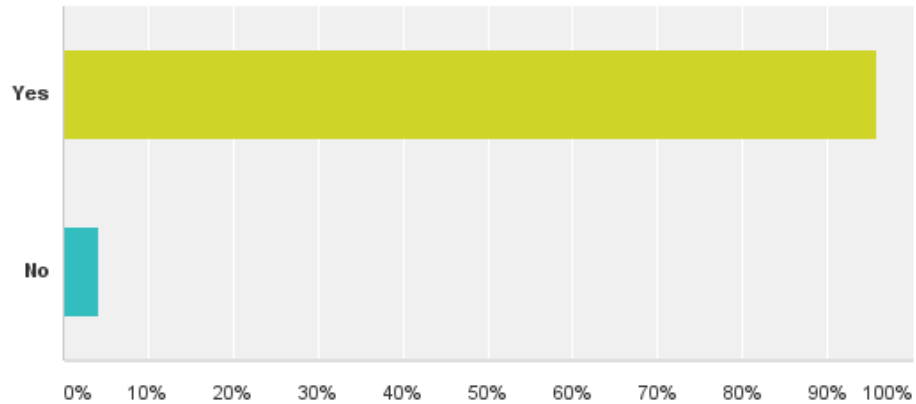
Q10 What are your sources of general Arboretum news and updates?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1



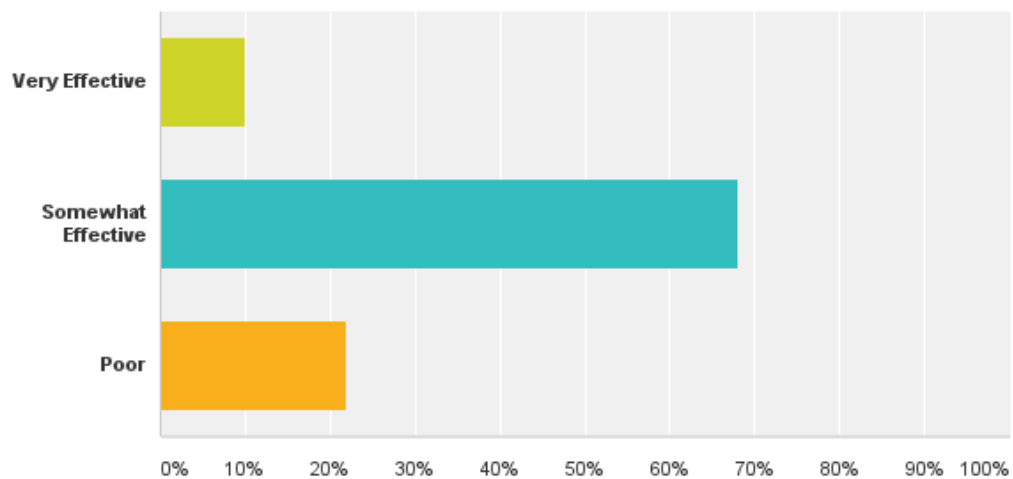
Q11 Do you feel the all-staff monthly meeting is a good source of information?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 7



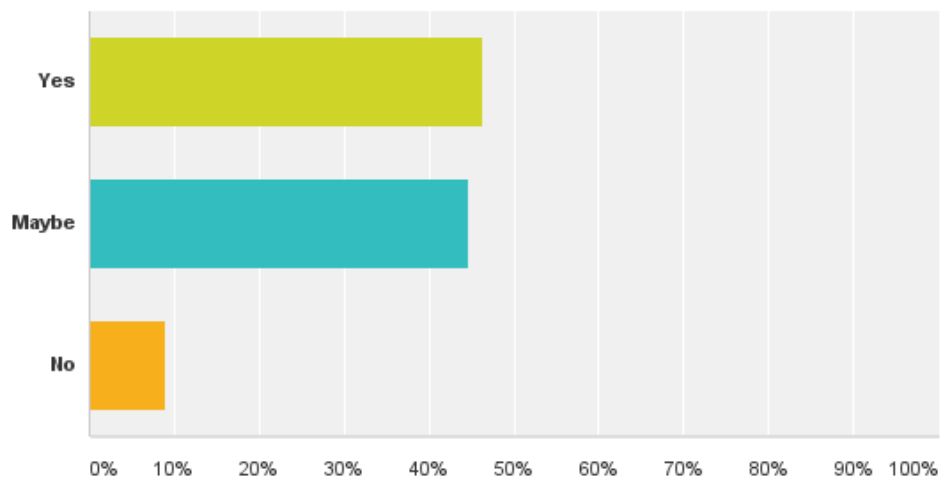
Q12 How would you describe the effectiveness of internal communications at the Arboretum?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 6



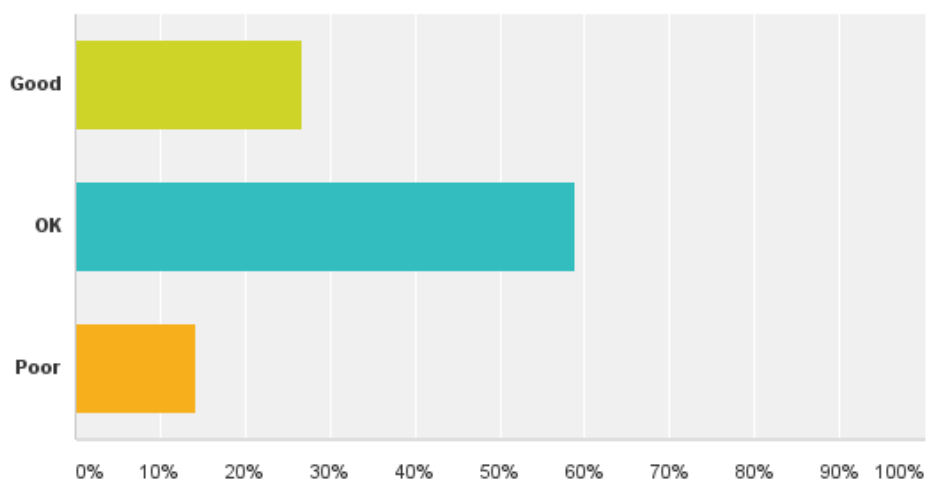
Q13 Do you think an employee newsletter would be a good idea?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



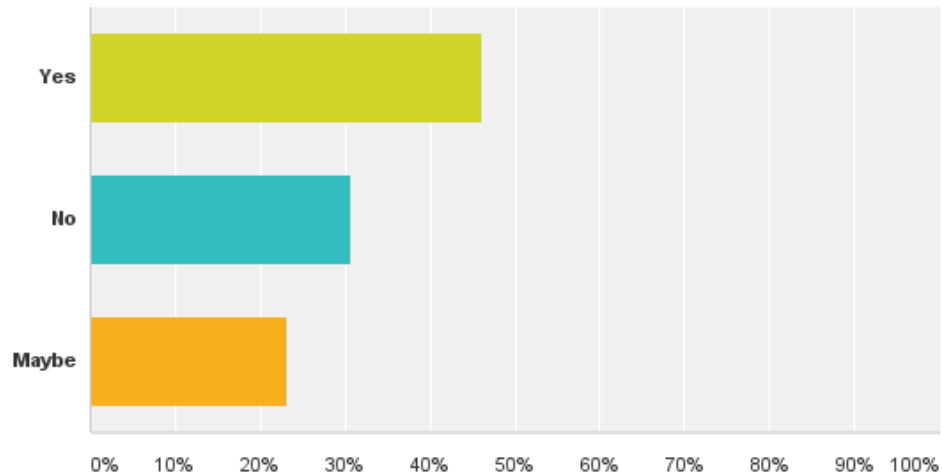
Q14 How would you describe employee morale at the Arboretum?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



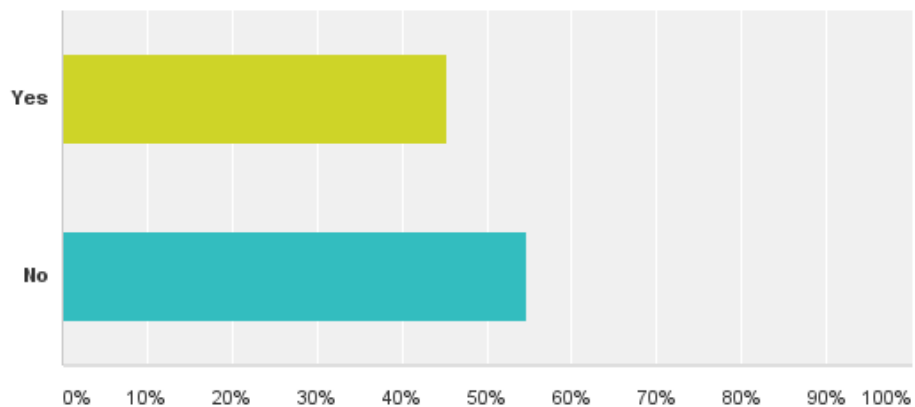
Q15 Would you be interested in receiving training in the area of customer service?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 4



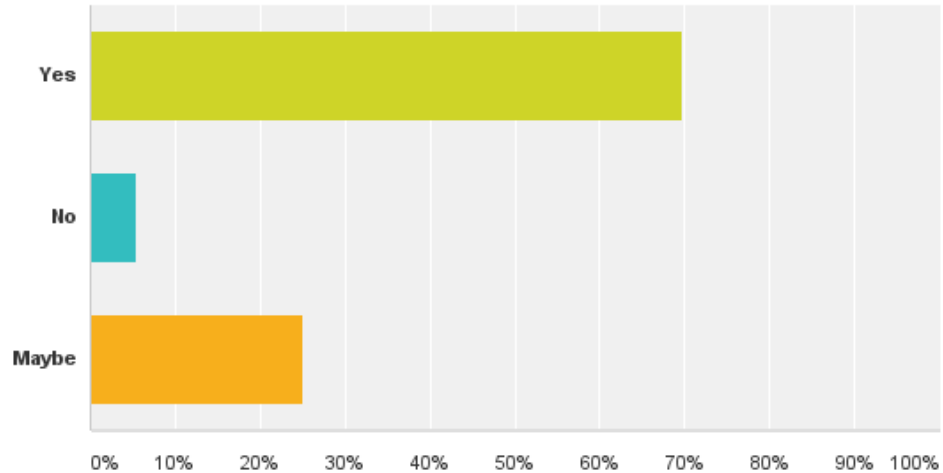
Q16 Have you ever attended volunteer tour-guide training or received any "overview" training on what the Arboretum has to offer?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 3



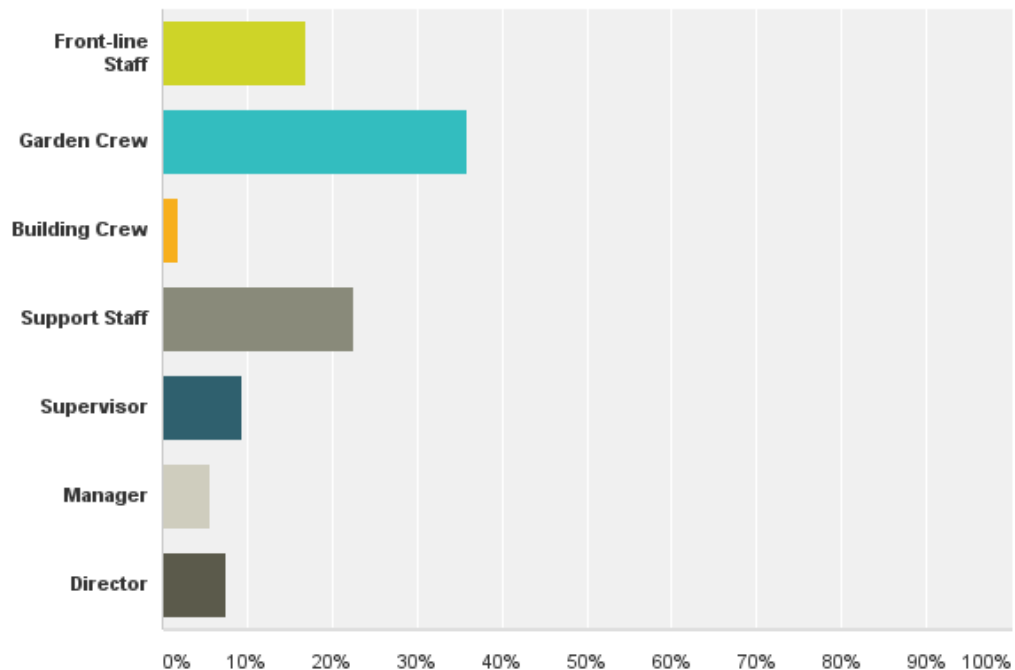
Q17 Would a "get to know the Arboretum" presentation be helpful to employees?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



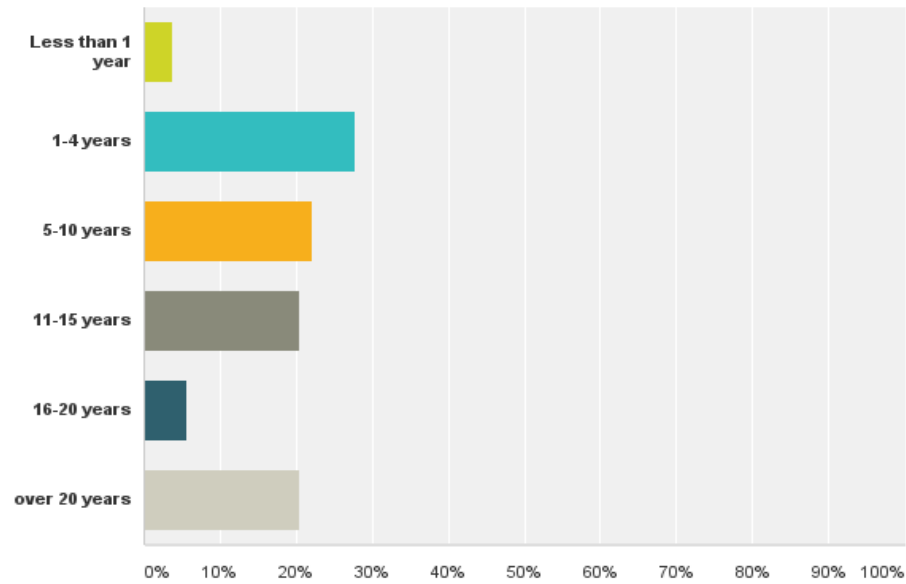
Q18 What describes your current job responsibilities?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 3



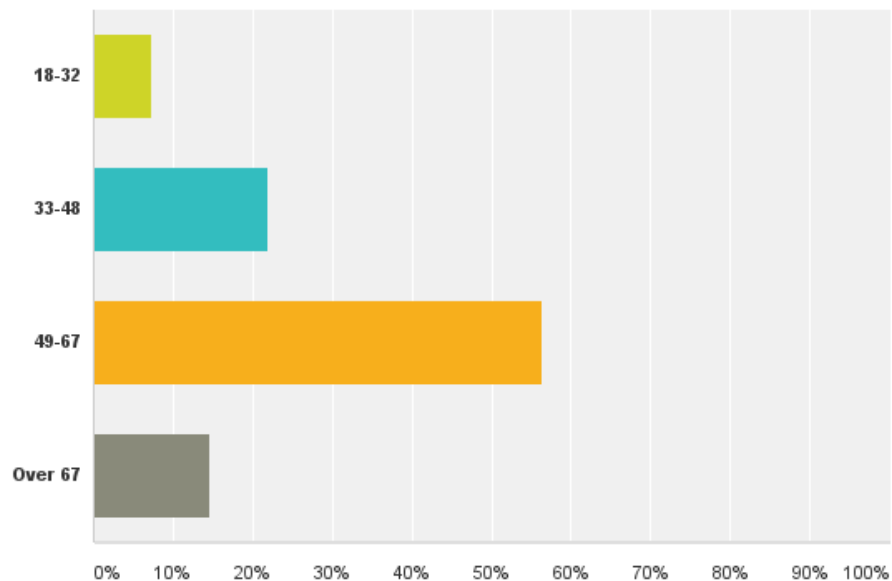
Q19 How many years have you worked at the Arboretum?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 2



Q20 What best represents your age?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1



APPENDIX D - U of M Employee Engagement Survey 2014

2014

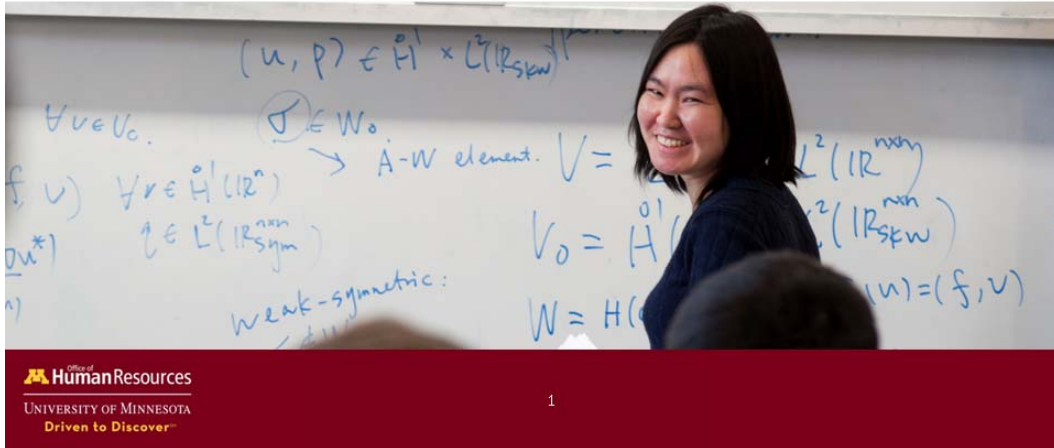
E² Employee Engagement Survey

HayGroup®

STAFF

Summary of Results

10841_Minnesota Landscape Arboretum_STAFF



Office of
Human Resources
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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1

2014

E² Employee Engagement Survey

HayGroup®

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Survey Administration Summary

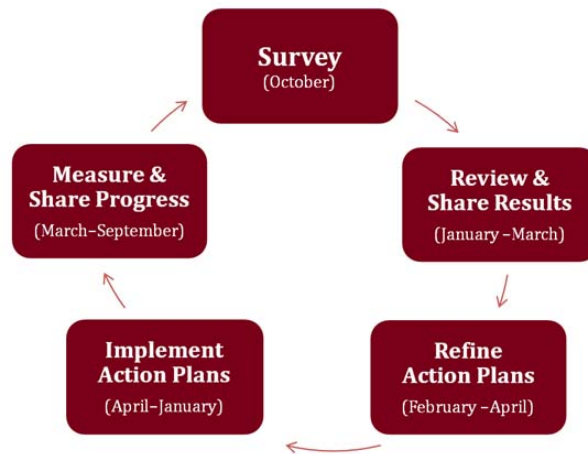
When	October 13 – 31, 2014
What	Separate faculty and staff surveys 36 scored questions in each survey Assess commitment and dedication plus effective environment
How	Externally managed by Hay Group to ensure confidentiality
Participation	All benefits-eligible University of Minnesota faculty and staff 2,484 faculty responses (52% participation rate) 9,598 staff responses (68% participation rate)

Office of
Human Resources
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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2

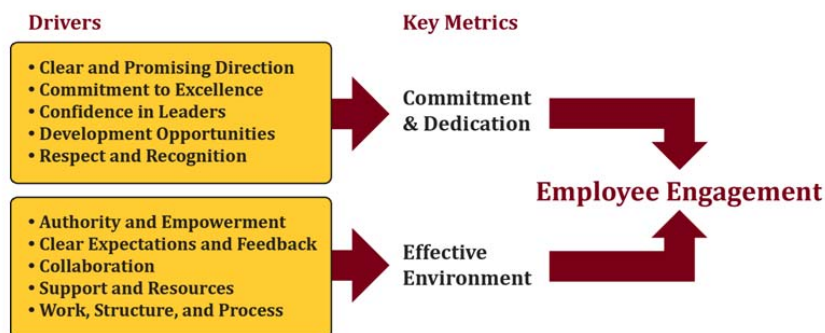
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Engagement Process and Timeline



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Employee Engagement Model



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Survey Scales & Benchmarks

	Valid N	% Favorable Difference				2013 Same Unit/Unit	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
		% Fav	% Neutral	% Unfav	% Unfav				
Commitment and Dedication									
14 I feel motivated to go beyond my formal job responsibilities	4374	34	22	35	-1	0	0	0	+12
21 I feel proud to work for the University of Minnesota	4374	34	22	35	-2	-1	-1	-1	+12
32 I would recommend the University of Minnesota (my campus) to peers at other institutions as a great place to work	4343	34	22	35	0	+2	+2	+2	-10

Percentage Favorable Scale

- **Favorable:** "Strongly Agree" + "Agree" and "Very Good" + "Good"
- **Neutral:** "Neither Agree nor Disagree"
- **Unfavorable:** "Strongly Disagree" + "Disagree" and "Very Poor" + "Poor"

Percentage Favorable Difference Scale

Comparison to benchmarks are expressed as percentage-point differences in percentage favorable scores for the same year (2014):

- "+" shows that your score is above the benchmark
- "-" shows your score falls below the benchmark
- Dashes ("—") show a comparison is not possible

Benchmarks

- **2013 Same Unit Results:** Results from this same unit in 2013
- **2014 Total University:** Current results across all campuses
- **2014 Total Campus:** Current results for your campus only
- **2014 Total College/Unit:** Current results for your college/unit only

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Understanding Your Results

- Review the percentage favorable bar chart using this quick guide to help assess and prioritize action.
- Consider the size of the group ("Valid N" column) in terms of the practical significance of the percentage favorable differences.
- Compare the proportion of neutral and unfavorable responses for more insight:
 - A higher proportion of "neutral" than "unfavorable" can be an opportunity to shift employee opinion
 - A higher percentage of "unfavorable" than "neutral" may indicate action is needed

Quick Guide to Percent Favorable

Assessment	Range
Strength	>70% Favorable
Gather more information	<60% Favorable
Action likely needed	>20% Unfavorable

The question number from the survey

	Valid N	% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neutral	% Unfav	% Unfav
Clear & Promising Direction					
1 My department or immediate work group has a strategy and goals that address our most important challenges and priorities	52	60	21	19	
2 I have the opportunity to set my goals in alignment with the strategic priorities of my college and department	54	59	9	31	

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Understanding Your Results, cont'd

- Results include percentage of favorable responses compared to department-specific 2013 data (when available), as well as 2014 total University, campus and college/unit benchmark data.
- Percentage favorable differences between 2013 and 2014 are unit-specific and may indicate areas of change in a more favorable or unfavorable direction.
- Use the quick guide (right) to assess the range of change between 2013 and 2014.
- More information is available in the Guide.

% Favorable Difference			
2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
+1	+1	+1	+3
-1	+3	+2	+8
+1	+1	+1	+14

Quick Guide to Percent Favorable Difference	
Likelihood of Meaningful Change	Range
Low	<5 percentage points above (+) or below (-) the 2013 data
Medium	>5-10 percentage points above (+) or below (-) the 2013 data
High	>10 percentage points above (+) or below (-) the 2013 data

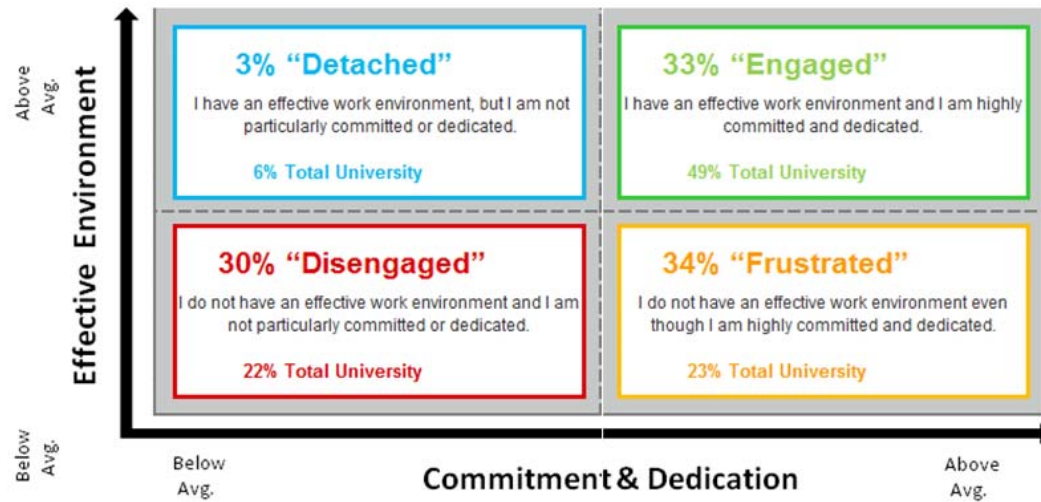
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Summary of Engagement

				% Favorable Difference			
	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
1 Commitment and Dedication	73	19	8	+2	-1	0	-2
2 Clear & Promising Direction	60	20	21	-16	-5	-4	+2
3 Commitment to Excellence	75	16	9	-7	-8	-8	-8
4 Confidence in Leaders	65	17	19	-4	-2	-3	-7
5 Development Opportunities	50	28	22	+1	-8	-9	-10
6 Respect & Recognition	67	20	13	+3	-4	-4	-6
7 Effective Environment	50	22	29	-8	-13	-13	-15
8 Authority & Empowerment	75	10	15	-5	-5	-5	-9
9 Clear Expectations and Feedback	65	19	17	-8	-8	-8	-6
10 Collaboration	46	23	32	-3	-17	-17	-14
11 Support and Resources	57	21	23	+3	-12	-12	-11
12 Work, Structure, & Process	46	33	22	-9	-13	-13	-15

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Overall Engagement Profile



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Key Strengths

Areas in which your work group is currently **most successful**.

Question Number	Question (Dimension)	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	% Favorable Difference			
						2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
35	I participated in a feedback meeting about the previous survey results. (Survey Follow-Up)	63	75	13	13	--	+19	+18	+30
3	I understand the results expected of me in my work. (Clear Expectations and Feedback)	73	82	12	5	-5	-3	-3	-3
8	I am treated with respect as an individual. (Respect & Recognition)	73	81	11	8	+5	-3	-3	-7
2	I am encouraged to be innovative to find more effective ways of doing things. (Authority & Empowerment)	73	79	8	12	+1	0	0	-6
27	Rate your department on the quality of customer support (i.e., responsiveness, flexibility, turnaround) provided. (Commitment to Excellence)	68	75	21	4	0	-8	-7	-7

STAFF

Key Opportunities

Areas offering the **greatest** room for improvement.

Question Number	Question (Dimension)	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	% Favorable Difference			
						2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
21	There is good cooperation and sharing of ideas between my department and other departments. (Collaboration)	71	27	24	49	0	-28	-29	-24
36	Action was taken on issues raised in the last survey. (Survey Follow-Up)	61	26	38	36	--	-9	-10	+2
23	My department proactively identifies and eliminates barriers to getting work done efficiently. (Effective Environment)	72	39	21	40	+7	-10	-10	-6
4	I have the resources I need to do my job effectively. (Support and Resources)	73	52	16	32	-2	-18	-18	-15
24	There is an equitable distribution of workload within my department. (Work, Structure, & Process)	69	43	28	29	-11	-6	-6	-11

STAFF

Results for Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Focus: Motivating employee dedication and commitment to excellence.

Consists of results from the following survey questions:

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Commitment and Dedication	--	73	19	8	+2	-1	0	-2
13 I feel motivated to go beyond my formal job responsibilities.	72	68	14	18	-3	-2	-1	-5
31 I feel proud to work for the University of Minnesota (my campus).	72	88	11		+3	+3	+3	+2
32 I would recommend the University of Minnesota to family or friends as a place to work (my campus).	71	72	27		-1	-8	-8	-10
33 Given your choice, how long would you plan to continue working for the University of Minnesota (your campus)?	70	64	23	13	+8	+4	+5	+4

STAFF

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Clear & Promising Direction

Focus: Connecting employees to college/unit strategy and goals

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Clear & Promising Direction	--	60	20	21	-16	-5	-4	+2
17 My department has a strategy and goals that address our most important challenges and opportunities.	69	54	20	26	-20	-8	-7	-1
18 I understand what I can do to support my department's strategy and goals.	69	65	19	16	-12	-3	-2	+5

STAFF

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Clear & Promising Direction

Focus: Connecting employees to college/unit strategy and goals

					% Favorable Difference			
	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Clear & Promising Direction	--	60	20	21	-16	-5	-4	+2
17 My department has a strategy and goals that address our most important challenges and opportunities.	69	54	20	26	-20	-8	-7	-1
18 I understand what I can do to support my department's strategy and goals.	69	65	19	16	-12	-3	-2	+5

STAFF

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Commitment to Excellence

Focus: Encouraging high-quality education, research, and services

					% Favorable Difference			
	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Commitment to Excellence	--	75	16	9	-7	-8	-8	-8
25 The people in my department are committed to delivering high quality services.	73	75	11	14	-13	-8	-8	-8
27 Rate your department on the quality of customer support (i.e., responsiveness, flexibility, turnaround) provided.	68	75	21	4	0	-8	-7	-7

STAFF

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Confidence in Leaders

Focus: Inspiring trust through open communications and leadership support

					% Favorable Difference			
	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Confidence in Leaders	--	65	17	19	-4	-2	-3	-7
16 There is open and honest communication between me and my manager / supervisor.	73	66	15	19	-13	-9	-10	-11
29 Rate the overall trust and confidence you have in your college's leadership team.	67	64	18	18	+6	+5	+4	-2

STAFF

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Development Opportunities

Focus: Supporting employees in developing and achieving career objectives

					% Favorable Difference			
	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Development Opportunities	--	50	28	22	+1	-8	-9	-10
7 Rate your opportunities for learning and development.	72	54	31	15	-1	-13	-14	-16
15 My manager / supervisor coaches me in my development.	71	44	24	32	+4	-8	-9	-9
30 Rate your opportunities to achieve your personal career objectives at the University of Minnesota (your campus).	69	51	29	20	-1	-4	-5	-7

STAFF

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

Respect & Recognition

Focus: Valuing employees and acknowledging their contributions

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Respect & Recognition	--	67	20	13	+3	-4	-4	-6
8 I am treated with respect as an individual.	73	81	11	8	+5	-3	-3	-7
9 I receive recognition when I do a good job.	73	60	21	19	0	-8	-8	-11
19 My department demonstrates a commitment to supporting my overall wellbeing.	72	60	25	15	+3	-4	-4	-3
20 Overall, my department demonstrates a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.	71	66	23	11	+2	-3	-3	-4

STAFF

Results for Key Metric:
Effective Environment

Focus: Supporting employees' success with the tools and resources of an effective work environment. *Consists of results from the following survey questions:*

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Effective Environment	--	50	22	29	-8	-13	-13	-15
10 My job provides me the opportunity to do challenging and interesting work.	73	67	21	12	-9	-11	-11	-16
11 In my work, I am able to make full use of my skills and abilities.	73	53	22	25	-10	-13	-12	-17
12 Conditions in my job allow me to be as productive as I can be.	72	39	22	39	-22	-20	-20	-21
23 My department proactively identifies and eliminates barriers to getting work done efficiently.	72	39	21	40	+7	-10	-10	-6

STAFF

Key Metric: Effective Environment

Authority & Empowerment

Focus: Encouraging employee autonomy and innovation to improve work

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Authority & Empowerment	--	75	10	15	-5	-5	-5	-9
1 I have enough authority to carry out my job effectively.	73	71	11	18	-11	-9	-9	-12
2 I am encouraged to be innovative to find more effective ways of doing things.	73	79	8	12	+1	0	0	-6

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Key Metric: Effective Environment

Clear Expectations and Feedback

Focus: Clarifying performance expectations and providing regular feedback

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Clear Expectations and Feedback	--	65	19	17	-8	-8	-8	-6
3 I understand the results expected of me in my work.	73	82	12	5	-5	-3	-3	-3
14 My manager / supervisor provides clear and regular feedback on how well I do my work.	73	47	25	29	-12	-14	-14	-10

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Key Metric: Effective Environment

Collaboration

Focus: Supporting cooperation and sharing of ideas within and across work groups

	Valid N	% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	% Favorable Difference			
					2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Collaboration	--	46	23	32	-3	-17	-17	-14
21 There is good cooperation and sharing of ideas between my department and other departments.	71	27	24	49	0	-28	-29	-24
22 There is good cooperation and teamwork within my department.	72	65	21	14	-6	-5	-5	-4

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Key Metric: Effective Environment

Support and Resources

Focus: Ensuring that employees have the skills, information and resources to do their job well



	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Support and Resources	--	57	21	23	+3	-12	-12	-11
4 I have the resources I need to do my job effectively.	73	52	16	32	-2	-18	-18	-15
5 I have the information I need to do my job well.	72	64	18	18	+3	-11	-11	-12
6 I receive the training I need to handle my present job well.	72	65	18	17	+12	-7	-7	-6
26 New employees receive the training they need to do their jobs well.	71	48	30	23	0	-11	-11	-11

STAFF

Key Metric: Effective Environment

Work, Structure, & Process

Focus: Promoting innovation and equitable distribution of workload

	Valid N	 % Fav	 % Neut	 % Unfav	% Favorable Difference			
					2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Work, Structure, & Process	--	46	33	22	-9	-13	-13	-15
24 There is an equitable distribution of workload within my department.	69	43	28	29	-11	-6	-6	-11
28 Rate your department on being innovative in how work is done (using new technologies or creative approaches to improve internal effectiveness).	71	48	38	14	-8	-20	-20	-20

STAFF

Survey Follow-Up

	Valid N				% Favorable Difference			
		% Fav	% Neut	% Unfav	2013 Same Unit Results	2014 Total University	2014 Total Campus	2014 Total College/Unit
Survey Follow-Up	--	49	31	21	--	+3	+2	+9
34 The information from this survey will be used constructively.	64	45	41	14	--	-3	-3	-5
35 I participated in a feedback meeting about the previous survey results.	63	75	13	13	--	+19	+18	+30
36 Action was taken on issues raised in the last survey.	61	26	38	36	--	-9	-10	+2

STAFF

Engagement Key Next Steps

	Review & Share Results January–March	Refine Action Plans February–April	Implement Action Plans April–January	Measure & Share Progress March–September
All Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share results with the unit/department; lead discussion of results to further understand possible areas for action Share data with next-level leader if no report is available. Set expectations that all leaders share results with the unit/department including roll-up data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share and refine current plans; if a plan does not exist, lead creation of an action plan for 1–2 actions to improve engagement Set expectations that all leaders take 1–2 actions to improve engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that meaningful actions are taken and communicated Hold all leaders accountable for taking action and incorporate engagement in goal setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison on “percent favorable survey responses” for metrics and key drivers from 2013 (when available) to 2014 Communicate and celebrate progress to-date Encourage 2015 survey participation
Local HR Leads and HR Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide consultation on individual leader report data when requested Provide context for data with key issues, goals, and initiatives as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance where needed for individual leaders on action planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support leaders as requested with action planning and communicating progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement local communications plan for 2015 survey participation

STAFF

Engagement Key Next Steps, cont'd

	Review & Share Results January–March	Refine Action Plans February–April	Implement Action Plans April–January	Measure & Share Progress March–September
Employee Relations Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide consultation on data in executive report in collaboration with HR Lead Consult as needed on data in the context of key issues, goals, and initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support units with HR Leads in developing Communities of Practice locally, with groups of leaders such as faculty groups, department chairs, and administrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support HR Leads in executive-level action planning Advise HR Leads as needed on local Communities of Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide units with communications to support 2015 survey participation
Leadership & Talent Development Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and roll out reports, deliver executive presentations and provide action-planning tools and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct additional data analysis; provide information and guidance for using reports to better understand the data and inform action-planning Provide consultation as requested to senior leaders and OHR leads and Employee Relations Consultants Identify enhancements/changes to the survey process for fall of 2015 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement system-wide 2015 survey promotion and administration

STAFF

Helpful Tools & Resources

	Review & Share Results January–March	Refine Action Plans February–April	Implement Action Plans April–January	Measure & Share Progress March–September
Technology-Based Support for All Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insight2Action (I2A) website (Hay Group)* “Interpreting your Engagement Survey Report Quick Course” (ULearn) and customizable PowerPoint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insight2Action (I2A) website (Hay Group)* E² website action ideas and resource library (www.umn.edu/ohr/training/e2/consulting/index.html) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insight2Action (I2A) website (Hay Group)* Track action plan implementation on the I2A website (optional) E² website action ideas and resource library (www.umn.edu/ohr/training/e2/consulting/index.html) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison on “percent favorable survey responses” for metrics and key drivers from 2013 when available to 2014 Communications Toolkit on the E2 website
All University of Minnesota Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in survey data sharing and ask your supervisor about your unit/team report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in action planning with support of E² website action ideas and resource library (www.umn.edu/ohr/training/e2/consulting/index.html) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support action plan implementation with resources on the E² website action ideas and resource library (www.umn.edu/ohr/training/e2/consulting/index.html) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inquire about progress on action planning and stay up-to-date on employee engagement communications

*Leaders will receive a report, and access to the Insight2Action website, if they have 10 faculty or 10 staff members who completed the 2014 surveys.

APPENDIX E - Focus Group Briefing

Prefatory remarks

Welcome. Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to join us this morning!
Greatly appreciated.

We're here to share perspectives on the Arboretum's organizational vitality, workplace climate and employee engagement.

There are no right or wrong answers or viewpoints here today. Everyone is invited to contribute. All opinions are important. Everything is confidential. No names are used in our summary reports. For accuracy, we are audio-taping the proceedings. The audio transcript will only be used by myself, it will be stored in a secure location and erased when my capstone paper is completed (probably by late July).

APPENDIX F - Focus Group Transcript - May 28, 2015

Moderator: We're here to learn and get your opinions on the work environment here and the sense of organizational engagement and communication amongst departments.

Introductions around the table. Nine employees, including the moderator, are in attendance.

Let's try to be constructive and focus on programs and processes and not specific people...We will focus on the general ambiance of your workplace environment.

Who'd like to start :

Participant 1: I think our workplace environment is great downstairs (in Marketing) because we're all in a circle and you can talk to each other. Sometimes, it's not necessarily the best, because there's a lot of stuff going on, and it's hard to concentrate, but if I have a quick question for some of the other staff nearby, I can just ask and get an answer. In that way, it's great.

Moderator: Participant 2 just came in and she works on the grounds crew

Participant 1: On the grounds, is most of your communication via radio or what? ... Walkie talkie is not as good is it?

Participant 2: Mostly radio, but we also use cell phone. You can use cells to call each other.... some of the crew use them...I think it's in our union contract that the U of M pays for part of the phone bill.

Participant 3 (tram driver): So much to tell on Three Mile Drive... our drive crew doesn't take time off.

Participant 4 (gatehouse employee): How the gate works...it's now the grand entry ...It doesn't function a whole lot differently from the old gatehouse. Things are a little bit better because we have more space. And we now have another lane but if we have a

problem, we have to get them through and we don't have the space. But on occasion it backs up. Like this morning, we had about 4 or 5 cars in line... and if someone comes up they get frustrated. and then...I don't know how to say this...when you're sitting in line in grocery store or wherever, the time multiplies in your head and there are days when the line multiplies in your head...Times when it backs up...There's contingency plans we've developed and they work. The thing is when you are asked to do extras like get membership sales at the gatehouse, it takes a little more time. But basically the people down there are happy and they enjoy each other.

But there are issues we need to work on – like Google aps, Living Social, Groupon...people go online and it says "save a tree" don't print it off. Show it on your phone at the gatehouse. Well, when they get there, they either have a cheap phone and when they get it up on phone face, it's usually just a photo, not a coupon. The solution for us would be if they would print it off. They could print it and give it to us and continue in.

Participant 1: What you could do it ask them to get a screen shot of the Groupon because then they could show it to you.

Participant 4: That's very slow (process). We'd have to write down the whole voucher number on it and it takes time.

Participant 1: At least, we're getting them in.

Participant 4: I wasn't here for the \$19,000 day....We average \$10,000 to \$12,000 a day at the gatehouse....when I left today it was over \$3,000

Participant 1: Target example...the expectation is that they should open another lane, we can't wait. Are we getting in a different crowd? A crowd that doesn't like waiting?

Participant 4: No I don't think so.... but we know how to treat them. When they drive up after waiting in line, we smile and immediately say 'thanks for waiting.' And that seems to help.

Participant 8: The younger crowd is likely to hop on their cellphone and bide their time.

Participant 5: We're pretty happy down there and there are days when we struggle but we're pretty happy down there (at the gatehouse)....

Participant 8: Tram departs and you tell them to turn off your phone.... but sometimes that's the only camera they have.... so you don't want them fussing with their phones at all?

Participant 3: In my 11 years' experience (driving the tram), one guy talked forever on his cell and it was so loud.

Participant 6: One (tram driver) was really strict about that... But then on the other hand, we're asking people to use their cellphones to post stuff on Instagram etc.

Participant 1: Yes, we have 45,000 people (fans) on Facebook and we're constantly in a conversation with them online but then they get out here and we stop the conversation. Some of the gardeners are doing their job and say they don't have time to interact with guests. I love watching one gardener who is always chatting up people!

Participant 2: Some people are shy and they're unsure. There's personality barriers, but I'm a social person. Whenever someone asks a question, I'm there to answer. I show them the flower or whatever plant. There were a whole bunch of elderly people here today...they lost their group and were so befuddled. I guided them across the street....they

were so happythey patted me on the back. They felt happy....I love talking about the gardens. I feel that's part of our job.

Participant 1: For me, membership retention rate is all about cultivation so if that person becomes a member and we cultivate them, I know that persons going to be a member the rest of their life.

Participant 2: I always have Arboretum brochures in my cart and I share them with the public.

Participant 4: About 5 years ago, I don't know how it got started, but we did a customer service training. I went to the headhouse and did training (for gardeners) and we talked about customer service. And that there's a kind way to tell people to get their feet out of the garden and there's a wrong way to do it. One fellow had a suggestion about having a card with important Arboretum phone numbers and it's a good idea to keep the card in your cart. It's a very good idea.

Participant 4: We got this new retail sales manager and he's already making a big dent in helping us...very helpful. The reason he is helpful is because he's a key person who sees many parts of the Arboretum and pulls them together... anything that's revenue-generating. He knows we should work together.

Participant 1: (As a visitor) I'm more likely to trust Participant 6 (a gardener) because she's not trying to sell anything.

Moderator: I've noticed that in my surveys the gardeners really love this place.

Not to be a downer, but I've heard murmurs about silos and inadequate communication across departments here.

Participant 9: What are silos ?

Moderator: Silos are self-contained groups....they are walls. You communicate amongst yourselves, your group, but you're not reaching out to other departments.

Participant 8: I have no idea what happens outside the headhouse (gardeners' offices)... and I do get info at the all-staff meeting but it feels like I'm just getting headlines.... just snippets.

Participant 5: There's a sense of that at the gatehouse too. It kinda feels like we are the gatehouse and our job is to get them in and be friendly. But then there's things like the LEGO coupon deal for a free entry and no one told us about that ahead of time.

Participant 1: Part of the issue is that there's so much to do on this end. An idea comes up and we work on it. And we get it to the printer...and get the flyer or brochure printed but we don't communicate what it is to staff. Something is proposed and we get it done and it's time to get it out the door.... and we have to keep thinking ahead. We're already working on fall stuff now.

Participant 6: An example is the garden reciprocity agreement. Used to be members of 5 local gardens got free entry to the Arboretum....Until this year. It was easy for them (the other gardens) because the other gardens didn't charge admission. But now we've decided to enforce this and charge these people. We don't blame them for being upset. Now we tell them when they come in and we forgive for a few months.

Moderator: Would an employee newsletter help? An eNews?

Participant 2: I was just thinking about that....you know how you do the bloom report every week? You could have a "what's happening in all the departments" report....

Moderator: In one of my classes, there was an example of an executive who does a Monday morning briefing report and update on what's happening in all the departments.

Participant 2: Like you know Duane would say he pulled the tulips and we're going to plant annuals....And Paul is planting this...and talk about the color theme.

Participant 1: That's the kind of info I could use, because I'm working the Membership Desk more (in the Visitor Center) and people come up and ask all kinds of questions.

Participant 5: It would be nice to have a list of what's being planted...because people are always asking.

Participant 4: *** will always give us a list, if we ask her.

Participant 8: It's tough to tell when something's going to happen in the gardens, you know, because of the weather.... but gardeners do submit a weekly schedule.

Moderator: Who do you send it to?

Participant 8: We give it to our supervisor and it ends up in the hands of his supervisor **.

Moderator: Yeah, *** is pretty good about sending us photos etc.

Participant 7: It would be nice to have someone go to each area and pull info to put together. There's a thread that connects us, but it's not tight enough.

Participant 6: We can kinda fake it when we don't have details in front of us ... a little bit fall color, pumpkins.

Participant 2: Much of it is due to staffing changes, etc. new people....

Participant 1: It would be nice to know what garden is closed, which fountain is being fixed. At Longwood Gardens they have a daily bulletin on their intranet. But that means they have a staff person who updates that all day. That's their job. We have an intranet but it would be great to have more capabilities for everyone. But the challenge is having a person to actually update it. Longwood's is impressive but it seems daunting.

Moderator: Another problem here, I think, is that everyone is physically separated...The gardeners are on the move a lot....people are in different buildings. It would be fun to think of different ways to blend different departments or shadow people or do you think we need more team-building events?

Participant 1: Well, I think I could weed ..(laughs) when I went to wildcat sanctuary... I was weeding. I would love to have *** on our team because she's such an ambassador and she's great. It's a great idea....But then the silo thing happens...No, you can't do that....You gotta get this done, that done....

Participant 2: You know, it's kinda the same thing we do with our interns. We have them go on each (gardening) team for two weeks....Work in the home demo garden, annual bed, etc. That's a fun thing to do....

Participant 6: We did have interns one summer that worked both in gardens and marketing. They split their job and they rotated.

Participant 2: There's a big divide between us and the Horticultural Research Center.

Participant 6: And think of the MAST students (international interns). They are just thrown in the mix.

Participant 2: (Laughs) Lots of sign language!

Participant 6: Jeff's tour (an occasional backstage tour of the garden)....that was fun

Moderator: And the Education Dept. had us over for brunch one day and it was a fun exchange. And as far as the gardeners go, to tell you the truth, I've never been inside the headhouse.

Participant 8: I started this job last year, and there was no orientation. I was just thrown into everything.

Moderator: To summarize, let's go around the room and offer up some summary suggestions from this discussion.

Group suggestions from around the table:

- Have employees take the narrated visitor tram ride;
- Utilize the Intranet
- Do a staff newsletter
- Shadow colleagues in different departments
- Have your department host a gathering with another department
- Provide new employees with a mandatory orientation
- Encourage cell phone communications with the grounds crew
- Provide all departments with a grounds work schedule for the week (plants being put in/taken out, plant maintenance, general projects)
- provide preview of seasonal programs/exhibits in advance to all staff

Moderator: Thank you all very much for attending and sharing your ideas!

APPENDIX G - Interview with Jennifer GoodSmith, vice president of marketing and communications, Morton Arboretum

Interviewer: I'm doing my final Capstone paper on how to transform Arboretum employees into Arboretum brand ambassadors. We are a large-size public garden with 250 employees (including 150 part-timers). Staff ranges from gardeners to greeters, researchers, educators and support staff in a very public arena. Diverse staff, work locales are separated and skill levels, talents and agendas are widely divergent. Overall, the staff loves the Arboretum....but there seems to be a lack of teamwork, unity and communication among the workforce. Many staff talk about "silos." One of the results is inconsistent customer service....and consequently a weakened Arboretum brand.

What has been your experience in the area of employee engagement?

Have you found that happy employees are great brand ambassadors?

Do you have a formal customer service training program at the Morton and if so, is it for all staff or just the "visitor services" crew?

GoodSmith - We just launched our brand and an internal launch in February and there was a whole process built around engaging staffthat's the most important part of being a brand ambassador.... is engaging staff and getting them on board.

Giving them an opportunity to be part of the process....I've been here for 3 years....what I've found here and generally everyone finds here....I don't know if it's just us or the industry, public gardens in general. But people are incredibly passionate about what they do here. People want to work in an environment or for an organization that makes them feel good about what they're doing. People who work in a nonprofit environment tend to do this. They want to work for an organization or environment who make them feel good about what they're doing.

When I asked a candidate, "Why do you want to work here?" She said, "Nature means a lot to me personally. I want to work in an environment that means something to me

beyond just working." This environment allows us to bring people in who already have a natural commitment. With public gardens, half of the battle is done. "I believe in what you do. I believe in what you stand for. I believe in what I can do to support that organization." Fifty percent is low; that's probably 80 percent of building a brand ambassador. The right promise, right message, the right tone and right expectation.

You asked about "silos" and the disconnect. I had this conversation this morning with my managers. We need to all be on the same page. Internal communication and brand ambassadors - one is external and the other internally focused. The word of mouth thing is critical and it has to start internally.

Our whole focus was forging a connection internally. We worked with an agency to help us redefine our brand architecture. And within the brand architecture, we started with series of conversations with staff to talk to them about what we were trying to do and that conversation about what we were trying to develop. We started with a series of conversations with people ...different teams and different times ...tell us what you think of this organization. Tell us what we do, what we can do and what we should do. We did several conversations, several with staff and board and volunteers and we asked everyone what we stood for and what we believe in and from that we developed a book ...interesting book....because most of what we were trying for was not to do a visual identity but to shift our messaging.

Bringing the brand to life. We did a staff presentation. Actually talked to the staff. Talked about brand development and campaign. A year ago and six months ago, we came back and talked about how we developed this information, based on what we talked about. That was a step we almost missed. Those who were closest, we found that people needed to hear what we were doing. I did an update blog on a regular basis to let people know what we were up to and put it on the intranet. We almost missed this step. What we found was that people needed to hear what we were doing now. In the past, I've done an update blog to update folks. We held update meetings and 80 percent of fulltime staff came. That's amazing with most of our staff on the grounds. We talked about our positions, mission, target audience, one thing we do that's unique.

And three or four evocative words that tell us what we are. Words came from these conversations with all these different audience. "champion of trees," all about global scientific research. Brilliance of trees now and for future generations.

Target – people who embrace nature. A living laboratory where the brilliance of trees is championed and cherished.

Personality....we are disciplined, confident and we are wildly passionate about trees. Essence is "we are tree-huggers seriously" and we added the "seriously" because this doesn't always have a serious connotation.... we're serious about it.

Then what we did, we developed a messaging book....

"Trees Speak. Listen." We read it to them. A very powerful book. And it was such a powerful statement to everyone in the room and it was ultimately printed.

Approved by board....first thing we did was share with staff. After each session, we had a followup survey....asked why they were champions of treeswho and why....

Feedback in person and writing.

We made a video and asked staff, "Tell us why you're a champion of trees and what you do." The staff video showed everyone was a brand ambassador.

This concept of champion trees. We had to tell staff they had to wait. They wanted to see and use....All of this was designed to get them to tell our message.

We launched on Arbor Day at the end of April.

The key is you have to ask people to participate and make them feel their voice is represented in anything you use.

Other things in the area of customer service – we did community outreach. An idea which I had was a "thank you" campaign. Staff people wear a button saying "thank you" and you stop people and say "thank you." Or they wear a button that says, "ask me a question." And we did media training to make people feel confident. For National Public Gardens Day, some staff gave walks through the area they are responsible for. This made them feel like they're experts. That's a mindset. Everybody wants to be recognized and heard. We had a newsletter every week and intranet. Lots of emails. Team bonding. We also had a series of 'lunch and learns' where scientists talk about their work...we always provided cookies.

We had tree planting on Arbor Day with food. Other bonding events include an annual pancake breakfast in middle of winter and thanksgiving dinner in November. A summer event with staff and families. A "Wednesday woods and wine" event. We do a lot of this. My office expanded and we did an open house. I used to work for college and every Tuesday from 9:30 to 10:30 we had a coffee hour with different depts. We'd provide food and at those coffee hours, more work and more engagement got done than any other time!
End

APPENDIX H: Interview with Lyndel King, Director and Chief Curator, Weisman Art Museum

Interviewer - The thing about the Arb is we have 250 employees - most are part-timers, 90 are fulltime...We have a real diverse staff - lot of diverse job skills, gardeners, researchers, office staff, skills, donor relations, sales

Just in conversation, it seems like there is a lot of silo mentality and not a lot of communication between departments.

What has been your experience at the Weisman as far as obtaining employee engagement and employee buy-in to your mission?

King: One of most useful things we did was something we did when we were closed before we reopened in 2011. We realized with the re-opening it gave us the opportunity to look at all our communications - some external and internal...we're a very small staff...so don't have the big issues... we decided that while we were closed we would take a look at our brand....at first, we thought new logos and a new look for printed material, etc....

We worked with branding firm - Yamamoto - they took us through lots of exercises, we talked to different constituent groups, talked to representative staff, board members, students and people around town who weren't necessarily affiliated with us and we worked together on a lot of exercises that didn't seem relevant at the time, but we did them all and in the end, we came out with a process. That really was so helpful to us in determining what the perception of the museum was and what we wanted it to be. In some cases, we didn't want it to change...but, in some cases, we did... But the most valuable thing is we got the staff on the same page and, all of a sudden, things we had been arguing about for years seemed to exactly fall into place and we were able to agree and come to decisions more easily. As a matter of fact, I've been doing seminars on branding for museums. Remember it's a starting point and not the whole thing.

It took us 6 to 9 months to do the whole (rebranding) thing, but that was the starting point and once we got to that situation, we rewrote our mission statement and our brand. The most important part was the brand personality statement. We decided to use WAM instead of the full name. We thought we'd move toward the acronym because it was more friendly and approachable and once the senior staff and everyone was on board then we started thinking about implementing. Part of this was through our printed materials, signage, and we of course had to use a lot of the university branding as well, had University media dept. people helping with us.

Once we got senior staff "buy-in," we started talking about way to implement - our printed materials and logo - but also in other ways, like our staff and guard's uniform. But also in our training and our hiring. And in what we look for in front-line staff. I wouldn't say it's perfect, but once we decided this is what we wanted to be and we had buy-in from senior staff and dept. staff, then everyone had to come up with ways of implementing the brand in their department - whether it was the info desk or people in galleries or people in staff up here..... it really was pretty effective.

I actually talked to all senior staff about a year ago, about what we can do to have staff more engaged...some of the things we have talked about and implemented is writing down a lot of procedures so that everybody knew deadlines....so for example, how far in advance does the events department need to know stuff.

Understanding different departmental needs so we spent a lot of time writing down protocol and deadlines and going over them at departmental meetings so that, for instance, the curatorial staff understands what the communications staff needs and why they can't pull things out of the exhibition the day before it opens because maybe the communications people sent that out as a PR image. But (from curator's viewpoint) when you're doing an exhibit in the galleries you don't think of that stuff and you have to make room to fit everything in and just understanding each other's jobs and deadlines.

We've made a real effort to do that. I interviewed everybody and we talked and came up with a list of 10 things we needed to do over the following year to improve and achieve staff engagement and one of those things was writing down the protocols and the deadlines and sharing them with everybody. We mentioned more frequent, informal

things for the staff, i.e. happy hours. We all did the Strength Finder exercise that the U offers and we all did that and we had someone come and talk about the results and our strengths and how we wanted to work with that info. Between the branding exercise and getting on same page with brand identity for all senior staff and everyone coming together to talk about how we want to implement this each in their own dept.

And everyone coming up with ideas about what they needed from the rest of the group to make their jobs work. And all the time keeping the visitors front and center. I think that's helped us a lot. That's some of the things we've done. And of course it's harder when you have more people on staff like the Arboretum you have more layers...it's harder...

Interviewer: Yes at the Arb the offices are at different places on the grounds. How big is staff at the Weisman?

King: 28 fulltime and volunteers and student employees. 50 part-time student employees. We now have a luncheon in the fall at the beginning of academic year with all staff and student staff ...to introduce them to us and introduce us to them and each fulltime staffer talks for 5 minutes about what their dept. does and the students introduce themselves...we did that first time last year and it was successful. We paid for lunch for all the new employees so ...

So that's something you could do...you could do it by departments at the beginning of each season because I'm sure there are lots of seasonal employees at the arboretum you could to it in the spring.... when you have all the new employees

Customer service training? For front line staff.... that's up to our visitor services manager. That's a constant challenge because of the student employees...

Not all the students are sophisticated when it comes to dealing with customers....Marissa does a good job with the store but one of the things that John and Marissa and I have talked about is how much harder it is to work with student staff these days than it was 5 or 6 years ago...

They require lots more oversight....they've observed it... I suggested they should talk to each other...they say it takes so long to supervise the staff that they don't have time to do the rest of their job as they used to.

I think it's a generational thing...so generational training might be a good thing to do too. We haven't done it yet, but there's a company in town that talks about generations.

Generation Z ...past the Millennials.... born after 1995the 25 and younger crowd.

On being a docent or guard: Guards need to know how to maintain security without offending people.

Docent guides get a lot of training from our education director.... that's a whole new thing ...lots of different ideas on what a docent tour should be whether it's imparting information or having people interact with the art or enticing them to

interact... Then you get into the theory of museum educationit's a whole other discipline....

Interviewer: Another thing ...how to you do your internal communications.... eNews etc.

King: We have senior staff meetings and all-staff meetings every other week....sometimes it's just catching up. Sometimes we have a specific program or piece of info. Any announcements are said verbally as well as being sent on a list serve.

We don't have a newsletter or Enews because we're quite small.

Interviewer: You have team get-togethers and bonding?

King: Yes and we're small enough that you can see each other in the coffee room and we purposefully made it so that everybody had to come up here to get their mail. The mail isn't delivered to youyou have to come up here to get your mail.

And this is where the main Xerox machine is... if you have a big job, you need to do it up here. I see people informally in the copy room and the work room / coffee room.

People from downstairs come up here and that means I can run into them...because we're small that's easier, but I should say that even in a small organization, internal communication can be an issue. Email doesn't always help.

Interviewer: Especially for us...gardeners don't have time to check email. And they take breaks in the restaurant....but it's a public place.

King: Having a non-public place to get-together I think is a good idea. Somebody could come to one of those 10 a.m. meetings and make announcements, if emails and texts aren't reaching everyone....

The formal branding exercise also helped....I was dubious at the beginning. It's a concept from business and you don't think it would work but it was very helpful.

More informal style now. Our programs are much more informal...meet and greet....instead of lectures...there's more interactions....

Look at Culturetrack...survey every year by Arthur Cohen.... talking about audience and ages.

End of Interview

APPENDIX I : Interview with Marnie Conley, Marketing Director, Longwood Gardens

Interviewer - We are a good size public garden with 250 employees. Sometimes we lack sense of overall teamwork and camaraderie and some even talk of silos. And that can effect customer service.

What's your experience in the area of employee engagement and do you face issues with that in your job?

Conley: I don't (face those issues) here. We have a culture here that's highly collaborative and we're conscious of people's roles and expertise ...its' rare when we have depts going rogue....it's an inclusive environment and that's the only way we can get things done here..... because we have a lot of large projects....

I think the people who work in silos here would be education and that's intentional...sometimes we don't know enough about what they're up to and what they're doing. But I think that's not a criticism. It's probably just the way in which they work. so I think it's rare that I feel were not in the know ...we don't have silos as many one would think.....

Interviewer: Our education director says sometimes you need silos to get stuff done.

Conley: Say education has a technology initiative and their system doesn't talk to another system.... but beyond education, if we're not talking about what our mission is or our goals, I think we're missing something valuable.

We do work in "silos" - marketing is constantly turning out work that we don't tell anyone about, but when it affects more than us, it's collaborative....so there's a time and a place for silos.

Interviewer: How do you manage your internal communication?

Conley: We have a system called Sharepoint and it's very dynamicwe've had it for many years. The first go-round was 2008 when it was first implemented and it became a tool no one was properly trained on...so no one used it properly. When we launched our brand in 2012, we said the only way we can get everyone engaged and start to make changes is through internal communications. It makes it easier for people to collaborate on line and share things, so our (marketing) department and our IT dept and our guest services collaboratively worked on re-launching Sharepoint and now we do everything on that system....Everyone has their own departmental space, their own division space. We share documents and collaborate, but most importantly, the home page is something that comes up (with) a new screen every morning for everyone. It has the day's events, tells what's happening in the gardens today and it goes through every event, what's in bloom, cafe menu and operations status. So any closures, shutdowns or any work that's going on in the gardens is in that section. Our attendance and key performance indicators (are there) so we know where attendance is at all times. We have spotlights on staff and then we have a section called this week's news and we share victories, etc.

It is updated every day for our 190 full time staff and over 200 part time staff. Everybody can put anything on there....but it is controlled to some degree within each department. But there's not one person managing the information. However, on the IT

front, there's one person managing the technology. But everyone is responsible for spreading the word about what they're doing.

Interviewer: We have an intranet....but it could be better....more possibilities. Right now, it seems kind of awkward.

Conley: The adoption period was long. I'd say it took us a good 12 months for people to be comfortable with it and now it is the portal to everything that we need. Updates on project, resources, attendance and its' absolutely everything (we need). And that's what they use in guest services....they have a line-up where staff get together every morning and talk about what's happening that day and they use that as a guide.

Interviewer: Tell us about the area of customer service....how do you train the staff? How do you create a welcoming attitude toward the visitors? What format do you use to train staff to be brand ambassadors or welcoming to the public.

Conley: We have a guest services academy....

Interviewer - I think my colleague went to that...
So this is an established training program?

Conley: We do for staff we make sure that they're doing (this). When the onboard (happens) - when they first get their job - they go through a two-day workshop and it talks about our brand, our mission, our founder, educating them on all the basics of Longwood and our culture and then it goes through our steps of (customer) service. (It's important) to educate every staff member....no matter if it's a plumber....a marketer....or a ticket seller that it is really important the guests are buying an experience and not a ticket. Every exchange matters. It's extensive on-boarding and then refreshers are held throughout the year. Then we also roll out the public gardens museum (training) once a year...we can take up to 15 people and they come here for two or three days and we give them the training.

The one thing that's important to know is we're just not shoving this guest experience onto peoplewe're not pushing it down (on them). We are measuring people on their guest engagement (skills) during performance reviews and it's embedded in our performance management system.

Interviewer: Gardens are very public and it seems every employee has some interaction with public day to day. One other area - Do you have any team-bonding experiences among staff? As a way to further organizational engagement?

Conley: I would say there's a couple of things. We have a couple staff parties a year, a picnic once a year and a winter party, things like that and health and wellness fairs. I don't think we do bonding (as a staff), even with the team-building. Maybe the departments do that. Like when we did our marketing retreat, we did a team-building exercise at the beginning. But we don't do it with all staff.

Interviewer: Grunig's "theory of excellence" defines PR as an integral part of management and internal communications are very crucial. So I'm trying to see how to use this theory in trying to build a sense of brand ambassadorship.

Conley: I have worked in another garden and in a museum. I would say our culture is really differentI would say nearly 100 percent of our people like their jobs. I would say 90 percent love their jobs at the garden. There's a whole job satisfaction that equates to people's level of engagement and their positive impressions on the guests. It's a big cycle and I'm curious if there's research out there that shows that.

That is something we take seriouslywe try to support guest services, support HR and communicate to staff and hope people realize the positive work we're doing out there for our guests. It's important for people to see and that translates into good exchanges with guests. So I think while Sharepoint is great, I think it's less about a technology tool and more about a culture in general.

We work very, very hard here but it's all for the common goal...we know what our endgoal is and that makes a huge difference. In six years, we've changed dramatically for the better and I think a lot of that has to do with engagement of staff on planning efforts, strategic planning.... Everyone understands what their role is and they also understand how it attaches to the greater cause.

Interviewer: Two other people I've talked to mentioned they went through a "brand refresh"....and it was very helpful in creating employee engagement.

Conley: Our brand refresh was in January 2012 and it was critical in many ways. Staff felt it was a more honest representation of what they do...the photography looked better, the marketing was smarter.... it made them feel really proud.

APPENDIX J - Interview with Director D

Interviewer: How can the Arboretum build employee morale and obtain more staff buy-in to our mission?

Director D: I think people will have better morale if they are overly informed. So my commitment is "when in doubt, over-inform." What do I mean? Here's an example I was given by my mentor 30 some years ago and his mantra was "when in doubt, Frank, inform the old man." I had the position I have in a small college. The "old man" was the president of the college.

When you meet with him - always have an agenda and when you are in doubt, inform the old man, even if you think it's not that important. If you do this enough, you will gain his confidence

So morale and trust between the president and me grew by leaps and bounds in a relatively short amount of time because he knew I was on top of stuff and if I didn't have an answer he knew I could get an answer.

In the same way, "over-inform the old man" also means when in doubt, over-communicate with your colleagues about anything you believe they need to know. Never assume anything ...now that's painful sometimes because it's a lot of work. It's human nature that when things are painful and a lot of work, we often take the shortcut ...therefore communications and the feeling of camaraderie suffers. Period. So I would answer the "building morale" question issue and sense of teamwork as "when in doubt, overly inform the old man, so to speak."

To increase communication - that's a technique that's first in my mind. How do we get there? You just have to say to yourself, "Alright I just finished this call report or this email or this conversation," and you have to think - who do I need to inform ...who in my collegial world needs to know what I learned in this meeting? Now that's a little more painful because it means more work but the benefits oftentimes are worth it.

All this is not new stuff....none of it is.Good to be reminded.....

Interviewer: So the directors have their plates full, but how can the directors help improve employee morale? Anything you can do address this?

Director D: How can Arb directors play a key role? Two things - if you're on my staff, I either inherited you or I hired you...if I hired you, everyone knows I've done my homework on you and I've learned as much about you as you know.

Interviewer (chuckling): Wow, that's scary.

Director D: Well, I hope so. If you are my hiree or my inherited hiree, my task is to make you look brilliant. So what does that mean? It means surround you with the stuff that helps you do your job better than you expected to do it. That could mean equipment, if you have physical ailment, I support that sort of stuff....but more importantly if you were my hiree and I hired badly, that's different...if you were my inherited employee and I realized there are too many challenges, that's not what I'm talking about ... If I hired you and I think you are a gem, you have potential to grow into more of a gem. Then what I need to do is help you grow....along with the stuff that helps you be brilliant or more brilliant I need to help you grow. With what few pennies I have, I need to send you places, either shadow a colleague at a botanic garden XYZMaybe the Barbara DeGroot at Morton....send you there a few days and then send you Chicago Botanic....for a few days....professional develop ops...

Second, bonding opportunities. As a group, we haven't been able to afford much of this...having opportunities to do something simple like go to Floyds for an after-work or end-of-fiscal-year beer or go to Axel's or going to the club and using the pontoon and pool. That's a little more substantive. Let's get to know each other as human

beings...Let's forget about what you do at the Arb and focus on getting to know each other. In my mind, those two things along with surrounding you with the stuffthe professional wherewithal to help you be brilliant, that's it.

If the division director surrounds you with materials you need to be brilliant, and you become brilliant, one of two things is going to happen. You're going to be even more brilliant. You're going to feel better about yourselves and like what you do even more or/and all of that will have taken place and you feel good about what you're doing and you're going to run through even more brick walls because you like what you do and feel good about yourselves to the point where someone might say, gee that Barbara DeGroot is gangbusters...we need to steal her and there was a time when I thought when employees left us, I felt betrayed....but then I thought about itif they have become brilliant and look brilliant to the next opportunity... what does that say about me and my hiring process...what does that say about me as a farmer in the field fertilizing this seedling and the seedling grow and blooms and becomes a beautiful flower and a tree andI don't knowget me out of this metaphor...harvest the flower to go somewhere else. That says something good about me and my hiring process and you look around and think what did they do around here....they did great stuff.

That was my employment metamorphosis. My philosophical metamorphosis from "If you leave you betray us" to "if you hire well you've poured yourself in the process... you've done the homework"....

No. 1 - help them become brilliant...that can mean professional ops, learn from others, learn from mentors or other peers or whatever...thirdly bond with your colleagues.... or whether its PR people bonding with PR people or even PR people bonding with gift processing people.

Interviewer: Or bonding even among staff here....Frank what are your thoughts about improving customer service at the Arboretum?

Director D: Let's assume Barb has done a brilliant job of placing press releases with the press.... and has placed an attractive informational piece that causes someone to say, they have this LEGOS exhibit or butterflies or whatever, let's go to the Arboretum, so Barb has done her job and when those people pull in to the driveway their experience has to be nothing but gangbusters.

Their experience has to be top shelf. Greet them with smiles, pleasant words ...they have to have a good experience with the gatehouse, finding place to park or be assisted pleasantly.... they have to be greeted by the 'Kmart greeter' ...like 'have you been here before...oh, you haven't....welcome!' 'We're so glad you're here. How can I help you?' Person might say, 'I don't know how you can help me'...Here's a brochure.... Why don't you take the brochure? There's a restaurant upstairs and you can take the brochure ...buy yourself a cup of coffee or soda and look at the brochure... and come back and I'll direct youyou love roses? We have three gardens....you like hosta...we got that....you like Japanese garden...we've got one.

Secondly if you choose to have coffee or soda ... Hopefully the hot foods hot, cold foods cold and things are good....Hopefully the customer service style is effective enough so that after an hour or so, their reaction is ...'these people are pleasant people, they have nothing but smile...this might be a great place to work because they exude joy and happiness. I think I'd like to try this place again sometime.... Let's come back... in a couple of weeks.' They they may look at our membership incentives and, all the sudden, the math takes over and they buy a membership. Give them an extraordinary informative pleasant happy experience....because if that happens, we've hooked them.... that's the key.

Interviewer: I hear lot about the Disney training etc.

Director D: Everyone talks about Disney with tongue in cheek, it might be a bit hokey but it works.

Interviewer: The thing here is all our jobs are public...we interact with the public in small or large ways...I think the whole staff could benefit from customer service training.

Director D: I'm nobody and I'm nothing...but when I come to the restaurant on a day that's just teeming....and I say to myself, this is jammed and I have a headache and all of the sudden the wave hits me and all the sudden this doesn't become noisy or jammed but instead, I look at it and I think, boy this is job security. When we're jammed and it's painful to work here...this is good. This is job security. Having said that, when I'm up here in the morning or getting my soup in the afternoon....and I go to soda fountain and often it's flooded with water, with ice or whatever and I get a wet towel and clean it up and I tell people jokingly 'I'm building my resume for next job'... the truth is, if I were a guest I wouldn't want to navigate around spilled water or whatever ...plus I laughingly say 'I can't help it my mother's watching'....

So is that my job? No, but I view this as much a part of my home and people being a guest in my home ...it's more than a place to collect a paycheck period...what I would love and I think we're almost there... When I learn that people I've know for a while have been here for 20 years, 22 years, 35 years...the longevity tell us something ...there's a message there.... It's not just a paycheck and place to pay the rent....it's 'I love what I do, I love what I am....it's a part of me' and that's what I would love to see every employee feel.

- End of Interview -

APPENDIX K: Interview with Director A

Interviewer: What steps can Arboretum departments take to improve inter-departmental communication and avoid "silos"?

Director A: Staff Meeting time slots are too short to cover everything that departments should communicate to each other. Other information is available on the Intranet or in Enews etc. but not sure if everyone reads it.

I am not sure if people would read an internal Enews similar to the Hort Dept Twig Bender? We used to have something similar called The Leaflet. It does take a staff person to write it and they need input from all departments so that may not work.

Another idea is for each department to designate a person who will attend planning meetings and other venues where topics are discussed and then they are responsible for communicating information to the appropriate people in their department.

Another idea is a big list of who should know about what in each department and who needs to be contacted about things like setups, signs, special permissions for unusual hours etc.

We have some good past examples of Dog Days and Ladies Nights Out where several departments worked together very well.

Interviewer: How can Arboretum directors play a key role in improving employee morale?

Director A:

- Keep our staff informed of new projects, programs, issues, etc.
- Remember to thank people for their hard work and provide specific feedback - Ex. "I really liked your garden design because the colors complement each other and the plants are arranged in an interesting way" instead of just "Good work"
- Respond to employee concerns and follow through on things we say we will do
- Look at the Employee Engagement survey results and implement an action plan to deal with things that stand out on the survey.

Interviewer: Ask yourself this - What is my department doing to engage employees in the greater Arboretum mission?

Director A: Not as much as we could. We have some employees teaching classes and some doing TV or radio shows or volunteering at the State Fair but most Operations Staff are struggling to get increasing amounts of work done in their own areas. Another good example is HRC staff growing pumpkins for the Fall Pumpkin Palooza display. I think the research speakers at the Staff Meeting help everyone understand the many research projects that take place here but are not very visible.

Interviewer: Any suggestions for improving Arboretum customer service?

Director A:

- Everyone needs to know basic Arboretum information and keep informed of current events and programs. The Weekend Report that Charlene sends out and the press releases and Enews from you help a lot with this.
- People have to be trained to say, if needed, " I don't know but if you go to X (Library, Master Gardener Desk, Info Desk etc.) they can help you"
- Wear name tags or uniform shirts
- Handle negative visitor actions such as standing in gardens (grass always OK), climbing trees, picking leaves, etc., in a friendly but firm manner and turn it into a teaching experience versus a lecture or criticism.
- We need to have enough staff scheduled on busy weekends and weekdays to keep restrooms clean, avoid lines at the Gatehouse and Gift Store and Info desk etc.

APPENDIX L: Interview with Director B

Interviewer: What steps can Arboretum departments take to improve inter-departmental communication and avoid "silos"?

Director B: It starts with (1) a shared, common vision. This needs to be shared as (2) part of our goals. Furthermore we need to (3) build it into expectations, (4) share clear examples of how teams work across matrix organizations and (5) reward those who demonstrate this value of teamwork and respect. The "we" in the prior sentence is all of us...but (6) in the beginning of the change process - Arboretum leaders need to embrace the cultural shift - (8) build motivation, (9) support respect and inclusion/teamwork from the front.

Interviewer: How can Arboretum directors play a key role in improving employee morale?

Director B: (1) Do the above. (2) Listen. (3) Clearly articulate mission, vision, goals and how each person makes a positive difference in this shared enterprise. (4) Be honest. (5) Be a role model of emotional competence, respect and leadership. (6) Reward those who stand out, reward the team, inspire others to achieve.

Interviewer: Ask yourself: What is my department doing to engage employees in the greater Arboretum mission?

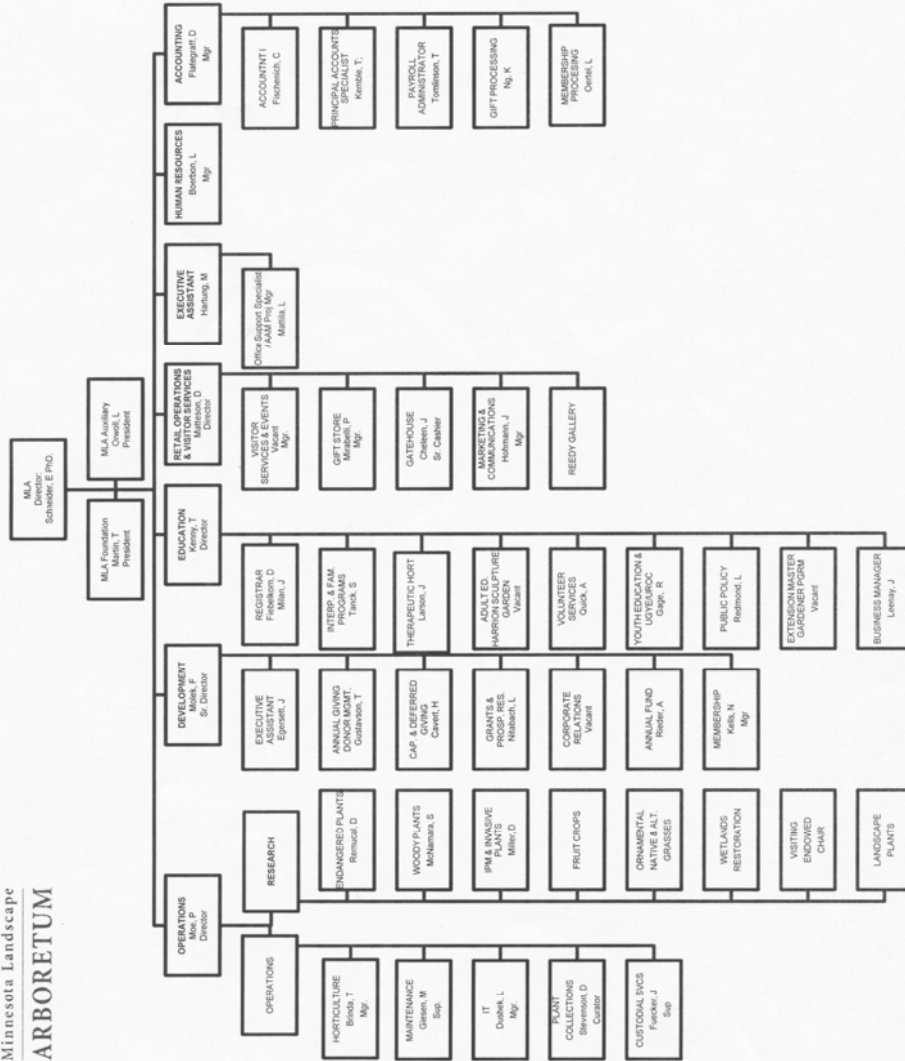
Director B: We are in early phase of doing everything above.

Interviewer: Any suggestions for improving Arboretum customer service?

Director B: Do everything above plus:

- Know our customers
- Keep our servitude saw sharp through shared bench-marking best in class and training
- Assure that wherever there is and Arboretum experience, we have support in place and ready
- Drive to continuously understand and improve customer/visitor interactions at all experience points
- Assure ready resources are placed to meet the service demands/expectations at all experience points.

APPENDIX M: Arboretum Organizational Chart



April 29, 2015